



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

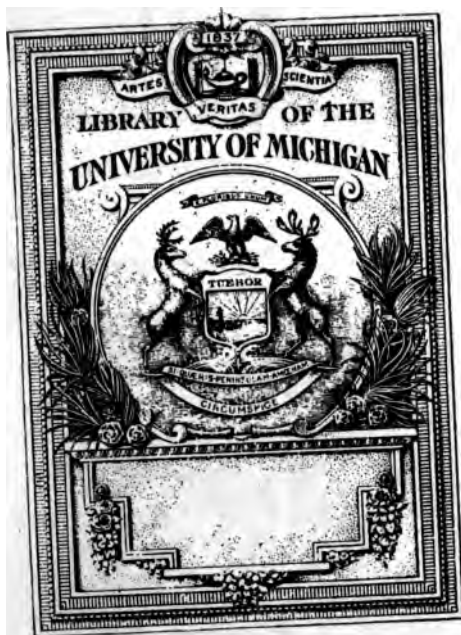
THE HYGIENE

A

814,473

SOUL

GUSTAV POLLAK



21  
15  
6



# **THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL**



# **THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL**





# The Hygiene of the Soul

THE MEMOIR OF A  
PHYSICIAN AND PHILOSOPHER

BY  
GUSTAV POLLAK



NEW YORK  
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY

1910

24

COPYRIGHT, 1910, BY  
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY

*Published, March, 1910*



***To***

**C. H. P.**

***ab imo pectore***

**375443**



## I

IN his suggestive essay on "Greatness in Literature," Prof. W. P. Trent, after considering the supreme minds, speaks of "writers whom most of us will want to read in whole or in part because their genius, within well-defined limits, is genuine, and because they stand for something important in culture and in the history of literature and are likely to interest in and for themselves." Among such writers, who, moreover, have stood the test of duration of fame, the Austrian philosopher, Ernst Baron von Feuchtersleben, occupies a distinguished place. No German work dealing with philosophic questions in a popular form has been as successful as his *Zur Diätetik der Seele* (The Hygiene of the Soul). Published originally in 1838, at Vienna, it has maintained its freshness to this day,

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

forty-six editions, up to the year 1906, testifying to its popularity in all German-speaking countries. The book has been translated into several languages. Of the English version by Colonel H. A. Ouvry ("Dietetics of the Soul," London, 1852; revised edition, 1873), an anonymous American reprint appeared in 1858. Neither of these two editions, however, contained any information concerning the author himself, and Feuchtersleben's personality may be said to be unknown to English readers. Yet literature chronicles few nobler lives than that of Ernst Baron von Feuchtersleben.

The great dramatist Grillparzer, whose caustic pen spared few contemporary celebrities, wrote, in 1851, of the philosopher as follows:

"I became acquainted with Feuchtersleben at a comparatively late period. Therefore and because our relations were mainly of a literary nature, I know practically nothing

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

of his previous life, and must limit myself to remarks concerning his character and his intellect. These are fairly open to the scrutiny of others; his own innate and most genuine modesty would under any circumstances have prevented him from alluding to his personal affairs. . . .

“Married to a woman who was the opposite of himself as to habits, temperament and education, he succeeded by yielding no less than insisting, by his intellectual superiority and his easy good nature, in creating for himself a wedded happiness the perfection of which has perhaps never been equalled. This alone, while testifying to the strength of his character, marks him as what he was in every respect—a truly wise man.

“Honesty, truthfulness, kindliness and modesty formed the basis of his character. He had the right to say of himself: ‘I have had to fight for whatever I am,’ for he never surrendered a conviction, or devi-



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

ated from the strictest path of duty, in order to gain an advantage. . . .

“In speaking of his truthfulness, I do not mean truthful merely in his relation to others, for that is included in the very term ‘honesty’; I mean truthful towards himself—a quality which has become rare nowadays, particularly in Germany. He never simulated great ideas, improvised convictions, cherished imaginary cravings. Not only in his thoughts, but in his feelings, he was true and consistent. He knew the limits of his capacity, and would not have overstepped them if a hundred journals had offered him pecuniary inducements. . . .

“No field of human knowledge appears to have been strange to him. In the domain of philosophy Kant was the man after his own heart. That philosophy of modesty, the culminating point of whose system is the humble: ‘I know not,’ a philosophy which starts with a body of facts that neither requires proof nor can be made to yield it,

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

which is quite content to comprise within itself all that is logically correct and conducive to the moral welfare of all, which, precisely because it sets bounds to thought, makes it possible for man's aspiration and emotion to fill the existing gap by religion and art—Kant's philosophy was also Feuchtersleben's. . . .

“His chief doctrine and his own aim and practice were the attainment of culture, that is to say, the fullest development and harmonious agreement of all intellectual faculties and natural gifts. . . . Hence Goethe was his ideal. . . . He watched with the most genuine devotion the unfolding of youthful talent, even in those writers whose works were in no way influenced by him; he was intent, in his criticism, on dwelling upon every good point, emphasising each happy turn and thought, always looking for the hidden meaning, endeavouring to supplement and suggest what was lacking, and entering wholly into the author's inten-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

tions. He was untiring in critical appreciations of this sort. . . . That is what I meant in speaking of his kindliness. His self-sacrificing devotion, joined to all his other qualities, completed a nature endowed with the most perfect charm."

Ernst Baron von Feuchtersleben was born in Vienna, on the 29th of April, 1806. He was descended from a Saxon family who had settled in Austria at the beginning of the eighteenth century. His father, whom the son describes as "a man of serious and stern character, devoted to his civic duties in a spirit of tireless self-sacrifice," attained the rank of aulic councillor in the Austrian civil service. The child, delicate and early left motherless, passed his first years in the country, and at the age of six was placed in the Theresianische Akademie at Vienna, an institution where the sons of noblemen are educated for the service of the state. There he remained until his nineteenth year. The education he received was,

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

according to his own statement, "wholly wrong. . . . The instruction was in the hands of priests, over whom was placed a soldier. I saw the talents of the most promising young men wither away under the influence of priestly pride and soldierly brutality. Twice every day, not infrequently three times, we had to go to church, and thus every religious feeling was stifled in us. . . . However, men develop regardless of wind and weather and tyranny, and I saw under this system young men grow up whose brows bore the stamp of Sparta and Rome."

There was, indeed, a good deal of the Spartan in young Feuchtersleben himself. His teacher of history, the enlightened Father Boniface, fired his susceptible heart with his tales of antique stoicism. Friedrich Hebbel, the editor of Feuchtersleben's works, relates that the young inmate of the Theresianum at one time resolved to do without his bed, and slept many nights on

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

the bare floor; in order to train his will-power still further, he left his favourite dishes untouched and half starved himself. He even refused to avail himself of the occasional permission to visit his paternal home, much as he longed for it. He gave a still greater proof of his self-control when one of his closest friends, in order to test his moral strength, accused him publicly of some delinquency of which he himself had been guilty. Feuchtersleben, after having heard who his accuser was, silently submitted to punishment, and when his friend, bursting into tears, craved his forgiveness, he quietly answered: "I only regret that you found it necessary to resort to a lie in order to learn the strength of my friendship for you."

With all its defects, the Theresianum furnished the eager young student sound instruction in the classics and the natural sciences. He found abundant opportunity to indulge his poetic fancy as well as his early

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

tendency toward philosophic reflection. In addition to the ancient thinkers, he studied Spinoza, Lessing, Herder, Kant, Schiller and Goethe. Much against his father's will, Feuchtersleben, on leaving the academy, decided to study medicine. He entered the University of Vienna in 1825, and in the same year, at the age of nineteen, published two philosophic papers—"On the Study of Nature" and "Concerning Genius." He remained nearly nine years at the university, engaged in the study of medicine, physiology, philosophy, æsthetics, and Oriental literature. In an autobiographic memoir—a model of modest brevity—which Feuchtersleben prepared, in 1849, for the Vienna Academy of Sciences, of which he had been elected a member, he alludes to the inspiration which he derived during his academic years from a circle of friends which included the composer Schubert, the dramatist Bauernfeld, and the painter Schwind.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Shortly after Feuchtersleben had taken his degree of doctor of medicine, in 1834, his father, in a fit of nervous despondency, committed suicide, and the young physician and his only brother were left absolutely without means. Nevertheless, Feuchtersleben was courageous enough to marry the girl to whom he had long been paying court, and to enter upon the practice of medicine. The results of his professional activity were pitifully meagre. The few patients whom he found, abashed by his baronial title, hesitated to offer him a pecuniary compensation for his services, and sent him instead some token of their gratitude, generally useless trinkets, so that the young couple were soon in the grip of the most grinding poverty. They were compelled to spend their evenings in the dark, as they could not afford the luxury of a candle light. Fortunately, Feuchtersleben's literary ability enabled him gradually to eke out a modest living. He wr

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

articles on historical, philosophical and æsthetic subjects for some Vienna periodicals, and published in 1835 his first medical work,<sup>1</sup> which was followed next year by a volume of poems.

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Max Neuburger, in his memorial address on Feuchtersleben, delivered at the Vienna Medical Society on the hundredth anniversary of his birth, speaks of this work, *Ueber das hippokratische erste Buch von der Diät*, as "one of the gems of medico-historical literature."



## II

WE find a judicious estimate of Feuchtersleben's rank as a lyric poet in Alfred Marchand's volume on *Les Poètes Lyriques de l'Autriche*. "What distinguishes Feuchtersleben's poetry principally," says Marchand, "is its elevation, its high intelligence and meditative philosophy. . . . It reveals a noble soul as well as a strong and liberal mind—liberal in the true and rare sense of the word. The author joins in a singular and exquisite manner the loftiness of antique stoicism to modern tenderness and eternal hope."

Poetry of this kind rarely appeals to the multitude, and, indeed, only one of Feuchtersleben's poems has become truly popular. It is the song "Es ist bestimmt in Gottes Rath," known, in Mendelssohn's setting, to every German. No English version can

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

adequately render the simple charm of this veritable *Volkslied*, whose first and last stanzas may be paraphrased as follows:

It is ordained by Him above  
That what on earth we greatly love  
We have to leave,  
Though nothing makes the human heart  
Which from its treasures cannot part  
More sorely grieve.

Yet mind what thou art told to do  
When plaint seems vain;  
The loving heart that bids adieu,  
Still can it say: Hope blooms anew,  
We'll meet again.

Feuchtersleben himself never placed a high estimate on his poetic powers. To Grillparzer's opinion that even if philosophic verse does not constitute poetry it has a poetry of its own, may be opposed Feuchtersleben's own clear-sighted dictum: "Wisdom is one thing, poetry another."<sup>1</sup>

Neither Feuchtersleben's muse nor his character as a man bears out the assumption that a sombre reflectiveness and

<sup>1</sup> Emil Kuh: *Zwei Dichter Oesterreichs*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

a grave outward demeanour were habitual with the young philosopher. There is rollicking joy of life in such songs as that on "Wine and Love," and a delightful satirical vein in many an epigram directed against bigotry or hollow pretence, and confided to the privacy of his diary. Feuchtersleben was not an ascetic in any sense of the word. "In his youth," says a competent critic,<sup>1</sup> "he was inclined to drift into the comfortable and leisurely life of the literary and artistic guild which attempted to copy, in Neuner's 'Silbernes Kaffeehaus,' the coffee-house gatherings of the English prose writers of the eighteenth century. Bauernfeld, Mayrhofer, young Anastasius Grün, Lenau, Franz Schubert, and others were of this circle."<sup>2</sup> The fame of Grün<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Richard M. Meyer: *Gestalten und Probleme*.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Ludwig August Frankl draws an attractive picture of these gatherings at the "Silbernes Kaffeehaus" in his *Zur Lenau's Biographie*.

<sup>3</sup> "Anastasius Grün," the pseudonym of Count Anton Alexander Auersperg, an Austrian statesman

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

and Lenau,<sup>1</sup> as that of other Austrian writers of Feuchtersleben's time, has become a cherished possession of German literature.

It was the golden age of Austrian literature, as measured by the number and importance of the writers who shed lustre on Vienna, and all the chicaneries of Metternich's brutal censorship, though they embittered the lives of the most gifted sons of Austria, were powerless to stifle their activity. Feuchtersleben, the enlightened "Josefiner" (as admirers of the Emperor Joseph II. were called), came in conflict with some of the literary men who, while German as to education and feeling, de-

and poet (1806-76), famous as the author of *Spaziergänge eines Wiener Poeten*, Schütt and other lyrics conceived in a liberal and lofty spirit. As a member of the upper house of the Reichrath he played an important part in ushering in the era of Austrian constitutionalism after the war of 1866.

<sup>1</sup> Nikolaus Lenau, the assumed name of Nikolaus Niernbsch von Strehlenau, one of the most famous of Austrian lyric poets (1802-50). His finest poems, melancholy in tone, breathe the spirit of Hungarian life and scenery.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

parted widely from his own ideas of liberalism. Of such was Adalbert Stifter,<sup>1</sup> one of the most prominent of the prose writers of Austria, who, at a time when Vienna yearned for political and religious liberty, proved an easy-going representative of the unchanging spirit of the Austrian bureaucracy. He became subsequently Schulrath (councillor of education). While Feuchtersleben attempted to educate his compatriots by placing before them the highest wisdom of all the ages, Stifter inculcated, as Meyer says, "quiet submissiveness and cloister-like meditation." The men differed as widely in their methods as they did in personal appearance. Feuchtersleben is described as "slender, his head, barely covered by thin hair, bent forward as if to extend to you a pleasant greeting"; while the well-groomed Schulrath was massive of figure,

<sup>1</sup>Adalbert Stifter (1805-68) is known as the author of *Studien*, *Bunte Steine* and other prose idyls and novelettes, containing admirable descriptions of nature and peasant life.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

with a double chin and carefully trimmed side whiskers. "Stifter" says Meyer, "prescribed an invalid's diet for all the ailments of the soul." Feuchtersleben answered him thus:

"Eure Hausmoral ist eine  
Excellente Wissenschaft,  
Gibt uns Stelzen, raubt uns Beine,  
Leiht uns Krücken, stiehlt uns Kraft."

(Queer, indeed, your practice pious,  
Queer the science you reveal!  
Stilts and crutches you supply us,  
But our legs, our strength, you steal).

### III

IN 1838 Feuchtersleben published his *Zur Diätetik der Seele*. Its success was instantaneous. "Since the publication of Goethe's *Werther*," says Feuchtersleben's most recent biographer, Richard Guttman, "perhaps no other German book was, up to 1850, as widely read." The author himself was entirely unprepared for the reception accorded to his treatise. In his autobiographic data for the Vienna Academy of Sciences he modestly remarks: "I may perhaps take occasion to speak in this place of the influence exerted, much to my astonishment, by a little book, similar in spirit to the work just mentioned [a treatise on psychiatry], but written for an entirely different purpose. This little book, entitled *Zur Diätetik der Seele*, was really the result of silent self-contemplation after many trials

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

and much suffering, and was intended as a solace to myself only. The kindly interest of a few friends, who had read some parts in manuscript, is alone responsible for the publication of the book. I had no reason to expect a loud response and never looked for one. But the old *habent sua fata libelli* once more proved true, and I attained a result that took me completely by surprise. Judging from many remarks and letters that reached me, it looked as if during a period of public agitation a faithful observer of his own emotions had succeeded in touching the minds of others so as to call forth an immediate response, rousing them, as it were, to a consciousness of what had been felt by all, without having been uttered by anyone."

Feuchtersleben's place in the medical circles of Vienna, as well as in literature, was now secure. In 1839 appeared his treatise, *Ueber die Gewissheit und Würde der Heilkunst* (Concerning the Precision and



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Dignity of Medical Science), of which Professor Neuburger, in the memorial address referred to, says: "Never have the cause of the medical profession and the dignity of medical science been upheld with more profundity and moral fervour. Indeed, the present moment seems most opportune for a republication of this work."

Feuchtersleben's merits as a medical thinker and writer were acknowledged by his election, in 1840, as Secretary of the Vienna Society of Physicians, a position in which he displayed during a number of years the greatest zeal and ability. In 1841 appeared the epoch-making *Pathological Anatomy* of Rokitansky,<sup>1</sup> and Feuchtersleben, says Professor Neuburger, was foremost among Vienna scientists in seizing the importance of that work and of the equally

<sup>1</sup> Karl Baron von Rokitansky (1804-78), President of the Vienna Academy of Sciences, from whose *Handbuch der pathologischen Anatomie* dates the study of medicine upon the basis of pathological anatomy.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

significant diagnostic discoveries of Skoda<sup>1</sup>. In his papers read before the Society of Physicians he "arrived at deductions which are confirmed, in their entirety, by the subsequent development of medical science."

In 1844 Feuchtersleben began his famous lectures on medical psychology, as the first incumbent of that chair at the University of Vienna. The students thronged his lecture room to such an extent that the professors whose hours coincided with his own found their rooms deserted. The results of these lectures were embodied in his *Lehrbuch der ärztlichen Seelenkunde*, which appeared in London, in 1847, as "The Principles of Medical Psychology, Translated by H. Evans Lloyd, and Edited by B. G. Babington." The work was described by the English editor as "remarkable for the clear and methodical arrangement of its matter, for

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Skoda (1805-81), Professor of the University of Vienna, whose *Abhandlung über die Auskultation und Perkussion* marked a new era in medical diagnostics.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

its depth of erudition and research, and for the impartial and philosophical spirit in which it is written."

In 1845 the medical faculty of the University of Vienna elected Feuchtersleben as its dean. But although adored by the students, and acknowledged everywhere as one of the leading lights among the professors, he despaired of his ability to carry out any of the reforms in the educational life of Austria which were so urgently called for by every friend of progress and so dear to his own heart. Metternich's rule stifled every manifestation of independence and liberalism in the university, as in the public schools. The influence of the clergy was paramount and the press was muzzled. "Where there is neither intelligence nor morality," Feuchtersleben wrote in his diary, after entering upon his duties as dean, "I am powerless to accomplish anything." Nevertheless, his personality so impressed itself upon his colleagues

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

and the governing classes that, in 1847, he was appointed "Vice-Director of Medico-Surgical Studies," a position which placed him at the head of the conferences held by the entire body of university professors. Among his public utterances as dean was a remarkable address delivered, in the presence of the court-chancellor, in April, 1847, in which he outlined a plan for the complete reform of public education, with academic freedom as its corner stone. What he then advocated was more emphatically insisted on in the petitions to the government, drawn up at Feuchtersleben's instigation, in March and April, 1848, when the progress of the revolutionary movement emboldened the champions of liberty to formulate their demands in unmistakable terms.

In the following July Feuchtersleben was offered the portfolio of Public Instruction in the liberal cabinet which had assumed power. He refused the offer, but agreed

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

to take the position of Under Secretary in the ministry of Public Instruction, where he thought he could wholly devote himself, free from direct political responsibility, to the task of educational reform.<sup>1</sup> The place of Vice-Director of Medico-Surgical Studies, which he temporarily resigned, was to be kept open for him. He threw himself into his new duties with all the ardour of his soul. "I may say," he wrote in a memoir submitted to the Academy of Sciences, "there could be no more congenial task for me. It fulfilled all my desires and suited perfectly whatever capacity I had. Thus I ventured to make the attempt."

The educational reforms effected by Feuchtersleben in the four months during which he held office were of the most far-

<sup>1</sup> Feuchtersleben's modest preference for the inferior position recalls Condorcet's refusal to accept the post of Inspector of Coinage offered him by Turgot, which refusal he coupled with the suggestion that he be entrusted with the task of carrying out some minor reforms.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

reaching character. "His activity," says Professor Neuburger, "extended from the primary instruction to the courses in the university, and touched upon art, commerce, and industry. He introduced the study of the natural sciences into the gymnasias and added two years to their curriculum, which thenceforth included the former so-called 'philosophic course' of the university. He gave complete freedom of instruction to the universities, abolished the filling of the academic chairs by personal application for the positions, did away with disputations and dissertations, and introduced public examinations." He naturally devoted special attention to the medical faculty. The abolition of the separate study of minor surgery, which had hitherto led to a degree in chirurgy alone, and the raising of the standard of instruction for army surgeons, were among his medical reforms.

Measures of this kind, which necessitated the replacing of professors who had out-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

grown their usefulness by younger men, created much ill-feeling against their author, and this was augmented by the impatience of the revolutionary hotspurs in whose eyes the pace of wise Feuchtersleben was not rapid enough. The events of October, 1848,—the fury of street mobs, the flight of the Emperor, the murder of the War Minister, Count Latour—which foreshadowed the speedy triumph of the reactionary powers, forced him to tender his resignation. “He had come into conflict,” says Grillparzer, “with something utterly antagonistic to his nature—brute force.” Feuchtersleben intended to re-enter upon his duties at the university as professor and vice-director, but all the members of the faculty, swayed by various motives, joined in an official protest to the new ministry against his resumption of these offices. Deeply wounded, Feuchtersleben retired into private life. He busied himself with outlining a history of education and wrote

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

some lectures on anthropology, but his physical strength was unequal to the shock sustained. He lingered four months in the grasp of an agonising malady, which, however, could not wholly extinguish the serenity of his soul. "For entire days," says Hebbel, "he lay motionless, his eyes fixed upon one object, and uttered not a single word; but when night came he grew talkative and enjoyed the company of his faithful wife; he took an interest in everybody and everything, and sometimes even his old humour and gaiety returned. It seemed as though his strength increased toward evening and fled with the morning—as though the sun had ceased to hold out blessings to him and had made way for the stars." He expired September 3, 1849, in his forty-fourth year. His death aroused Austria to a sense of her loss. The leading citizens of Vienna followed the remains of her noble son to their resting place, and his praises resounded far beyond the confines of the



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

monarchy. English scholars and physicians assembled to do honour to his memory, and French scientific bodies sent, posthumously, a diploma in recognition of his achievements. Nearly two years elapsed, owing to the political unrest, before the Medical Society of Vienna could assemble to do justice to Feuchtersleben's services to science and humanity.

## IV

THE French translation of *Zur Diätetik der Seele*, by Dr. Schlesinger-Rahier,<sup>1</sup> is prefaced by an elaborate essay on Feuchtersleben's treatise, from the pen of Adrien Delondre, the opening paragraph of which explains happily the charm inherent in the original work:

“It is a little book full of good sense and sound reasoning. In a simple and popular form, it conveys advice of the greatest wisdom; we feel that, as the author says, it was written in peaceful retirement, and that it is the fruit of slow meditation and precious experience. Feuchtersleben has had the rare good fortune to avoid those cloudy speculations in which German thinkers are so apt to lose themselves. He has constructed no system, but has written a thoroughly practical, that is to say, truly useful book. A work of this kind is beset by a

<sup>1</sup> *Hygiène de l'Âme*. Second edition, Paris, 1860.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

twofold danger—that of indulging in vague and barren generalities, or of descending to petty details, to a dry enumeration of counsels which cannot possibly exert a real and salutary influence on the mind. The author has known how to escape this double peril. He proclaims neither a pedantic science nor does he affect a condescending simplicity. He interests us at every step, even while instructing us, and what is more important still, he wins us over to his views, thanks to that gentle and persuasive philosophy which the entire book exhales. The lofty and noble soul of the author himself is everywhere disclosed; we feel profound convictions behind every passage, and we love, like Pascal, to recognise the man in the writer.”

A summary of Feuchtersleben’s treatise, closely following the author’s arguments, and rendering, wherever necessary, his own language, will, it is hoped, convey some of this charm to English readers. A literal translation would, in the opinion of the pres-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

ent writer, fail of its object. There are passages in the original which appeal with peculiar force to the German mind, but which would lose their effectiveness if transcribed literally in an English translation; and some portions represent a stage of medical knowledge superseded by modern science. Feuchtersleben himself, while mentioning certain alleged cures, speaks of them as "possibly due to accident and not to be credited to human foresight." It has been the aim of this book, however, to preserve throughout the spirit of the original, which, even through an imperfect medium, exerts, with scarcely diminished power, its influence on a later generation than that to which it was first addressed. The footnotes were added by the present writer.

The doctrine of preserving the health of the soul, according to Feuchtersleben, is identical with the laws of morality. In the last analysis all human endeavours and acquirements have but one great aim: to pro-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

mote individual morality, which is the very flower of life and the basic condition of human existence. The subject of his theme is, however, mainly that power of the mind which enables the body to ward off threatening illness—a power the reality of which, in his opinion, can scarcely be questioned, whose oft-told miracles have filled the world with astonishment, but whose laws have rarely been inquired into, while its manifestations have still more rarely been called forth as an agency for practical good. Yet every power that springs from the mind may be developed by us into an art, and if we can succeed in converting life itself into an art, why should we not be equally successful with health, which is the life of life? Such, says our author, is the meaning of the hygiene of the soul.

In referring to Kant's treatise on *The Power of the Mind to Conquer Morbid Feelings by Sheer Determination*,<sup>1</sup> Feuch-

<sup>1</sup> *Von der Macht des Gemüths durch den blossen*

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

tersleben speaks not only of the desirability of mastering morbid feelings, but of the possibility of preventing sickness itself. Often enough, indeed, he remarks, the soul can be aided only through the body, why not, then, try to help the body through the soul? He admits at the outset the difficulty of dealing with a subject which, like everything else instinct with spiritual life, eludes our grasp whenever we imagine that it is safely within our reach. There are subjects of research, he says, which yield but little if too much is expected by the inquirer.

Life in all its protean changes is what we all would fain have abide with us, yet there is no way of arresting its flight. If we live with natural ease, our life glides on pleasantly enough, but if we inquire too closely into its mysteries we are baffled and disappointed. Distinctions between the body and the soul, such as philosophers from time

*Vorsatz seiner krankhaften Gefühle Meister zu sein.*

—Published and annotated by C. W. Hufeland.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

immemorial have sought to establish, have something ludicrous for those accustomed to sane and practical thinking.

“I appeal,” says our author, “to the natural and unprejudiced sentiment of every human being. He who doubts whether he has a soul must not read what I have to say. Let him who credits the body with all I shall describe as the result of experience, interpret my words to mean: The power exercised over the rest of the body by that part of it charged with the so-called functions of the soul. However mistaken such a view of the subject may be, the facts remain nevertheless as I shall state them, and the lesson is useful in any case, for it is only with facts and their practical application that I am concerned. As to the power of the soul over the body, I merely refer to the simple fact that we are able to rouse ourselves from sleep. Though it may be contended that the very agency which is relied upon to free us is itself fettered, yet

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

the fact remains that it possesses strength enough to awaken itself, and that this ability becomes intensified by practice."

The natural, unconstrained human being, says Feuchtersleben, feels himself to be complete and leads an existence unconscious of itself. Progressive training discloses to us our own mind—a mere abstraction, be it remembered, which we reach through the manifestations of our bodily nature. In its association with matter, we ordinarily speak of this abstraction as the soul. It ought not to be necessary to furnish proof of the influence of the soul upon the body, since we can conceive of both only as united. To grasp and make clear the distinction between the two requires indeed a high degree of intelligence; to attempt to explain the nature of their connection is a still more difficult task, since we can think only through the union of body and mind, and cannot seize the very process of thinking which enables us to grasp the object of our thought



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

—just as the right hand can easily grasp the left, but never itself. Laughter and crying are perhaps the most obvious manifestations of the joint activity of body and mind. Every physician knows that the activity of the nerves constitutes the nearest link in the chain of these combined forces.

Proceeding to the causes of disease, Feuchtersleben points out that we become ill either because of the development of a germ slumbering within us (though the impetus may come from without), or because the individual organism has suffered in the struggle against the hostile influences with which the world surrounds it. In either case there exists a certain inborn susceptibility to disease which is essentially of the nature of weakness. Is the mind powerless to resist such conditions?

Feuchtersleben is not concerned with remedial measures recommended by physicians for the correction of inherited weaknesses and the combating of adverse

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

external influences. Remedies of this kind spring indeed from the mind, but not from that of the patient. Philosophers have often endeavoured to show us how a one-sided ethical bent, a decided tendency in one direction, may be recognised and repressed, or at least kept within bounds. May we not be similarly successful with respect to physical limits? In what way does the sum total of traits and tendencies characteristic of any individual manifest itself to his own consciousness, in so far as it relates to his health? Clearly through what is called his temperament, the word being used in the ordinary, popular sense and not as the metaphysical abstraction of Aristotle. Man is a unit of many compounds, and the subtlest students of his nature do not get beyond the point of representing the four temperaments as "elements tempered to individual life."

"Every individual," says Herder, "harbours within his soul, no less than within his

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

bodily frame, the germ of the full development which he is destined to attain. This applies to human existence of whatever kind and in whatever shape, from the most deformed being that can scarcely be kept alive, to the most perfect man, the God-like Greek. In spite of errors and sin, in all the stress and turmoil of life, every mortal seeks to attain, by schooling and practice, the full measure of his latent powers, which alone carries with it perfect enjoyment of life."

Why should not man, adds Feuchtersleben, the only being created by nature that can make itself the object of its own thought, be able to understand these conditions of his full development? Why should not he whom Protagoras has called "the measure of the universe" be able to measure himself? Whoever has turned his gaze from the tumult of the outside world upon his inner self must admit that the mind can influence the body; in other words, that man may learn to conquer himself. The power

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

which the mind thus exercises may be extended over disease in so far as its causes lie in the depths of the nature of the individual.

Strange indeed, it may appear to some, says our author, that the soul is presumed to exercise a power transcending its own dominion, as though the world in which we live and have our being were nothing but what we ourselves make it. And yet, what else is it for each of us? To the full-grown man it appears mature, to the child child-like, to the joyful joyous, to the sad-eyed sad, and as it is considered to be, so it acts upon every one of us. Man's happiness, as well as his misery, is forever determined by the impressions and images predominating in his soul. Why, then, should it be impossible to control these impressions? Why can we not train our eyes to brightness as we so often, alas! painfully train them in the art of dwelling in darkness? The raging of the storm upon the heath which drenches

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

the companions of Lear to the skin leaves untouched the unhappy king, in whom the storm of indignation that tears his breast drowns the fury of the elements without. Incredible as it may seem, the most convincing proof of the power of the mind lies precisely in its greatest weakness. Who does not know that those unfortunate beings whose souls are roaming in the night of insanity remain within their gloomy prison free from many of the bodily ailments which attack the normal persons around them? The soul held captive by illusions renders the body insensible to external influences by turning its attention away from the body. Ought not the trained will, tending toward the serious aims of the intellect, to be as potent as raging indignation, or the horrible power of insanity?

Feuchtersleben quotes the opinion of an English physician in the *Medical Reports* for 1830 concerning the influence of the London climate on the health conditions of

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

his countrymen, an opinion which in the lapse of years has lost nothing of its timeliness and applicability to other localities.

“It is an open question,” said this writer, “whether many of the diseases commonly ascribed to the atmosphere of our city are not the result of our habits. Just as the temperature of the body, through all the changes of the weather outdoors, remains practically the same, so the human mind possesses an innate power of resistance sufficiently great, if aroused to activity, to withstand injurious influences from without. Physicians tell us of sick women who, at a time when they imagined themselves too weak to walk across a room, thought nothing of waltzing half the night with a favoured partner. Such is the stimulating power of genuine interest. It is the fashionable leisure class that suffers most from the atmosphere of London. He who is engaged in active work that calls for the display of all his abilities is indifferent to the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

barometer. It is true enough that bleak November is the time of melancholia and suicide, but the dark sky cannot obscure the serene mind.<sup>1</sup> Even the morbid excitement of insanity rises above atmospheric influences. It is the thoughts which the self-torturing person connects with the falling leaves that oppress and finally overpower him. And while the anxieties of the hypochondriac increase and diminish with the changes in the weather, it is at bottom only his own power of resistance that determines his moods and the resulting condition. The hypochondriac is always, though it may be only temporarily, weak of character. As soon as he clearly recognises this fact and determines to cure himself, he becomes his own best physician."

What medical man, says Feuchtersleben, however limited his experience, is not

<sup>1</sup> "The weather and my moods," says Pascal, "have little in common. I have my foggy and my fine days within me. Whether my affairs go well or ill has little to do with the matter."

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

tempted to speak in a similar strain? Conditions like those described occur most frequently in the larger towns whose inhabitants are enveloped in the prevailing atmosphere of anxiety and passion. There we find those unfortunate patients whose oversensitive natures, transmitted to them perhaps as a sad legacy, are unable to cope with the hard realities of life. Has not every practising physician found in his own case that at critical moments only the most self-sacrificing devotion to his duty can dispel the clouds that threaten his own moral and physical nature? Such devotion is in itself a preventive of the dangers otherwise inseparable from the activity of a physician, and indeed we often find that the harm we may sustain in the discharge of a duty carries its own healing balm with it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "I have always found," says the eminent physician Hufeland, "that the more fully we devote our lives to active and practical work, that is to say, the more we are drawn to the world without, the less liable we are to attacks of hypochondria. The



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Goethe relates an incident concerning himself which is worth quoting, because in this case the incentive supplied by professional zeal is wanting, and the manifestation of will power therefore all the more striking.

"I was exposed," he says, "to the direct contagion of a putrid fever, and warded best proof of this is furnished by physicians in active practice. They are continuously busy with sick people, until finally illnesses and ailments form the staple of their thoughts. It would seem therefore as if they ought to think of their own bodily concerns with equal intensity, and that logically all physicians must finally become hypochondriacs. As a matter of fact, however, we find that busy physicians are scarcely ever sufferers from hypochondria. And why? Because they accustom themselves from the very beginning to consider sickness objectively, as a result of which they look upon themselves and their own ailments in an impersonal way, as detached, so to say, from their real selves, so that they can regard their ailments as something belonging to the outer world, and make them objects of their skill. Our true self cannot become ill."—Hufeland's Notes to Kant's *Von der Macht des Gemüths durch den blossen Vorsatz seiner krankhaften Gefühle Meister zu sein*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

off the disease by sheer force of will. It is incredible what may be done in such cases by moral determination, which permeates, as it were, the entire body and puts it into an active state of resistance to noxious influences. Fear is a condition of indolent weakness, which renders us an easy prey to adverse influences." There is a particular value, adds Feuchtersleben, in quoting facts concerning Goethe's inner life, as with him everything is real and the result of actual experience, while in the case of so many others much must be ascribed to self-deception.

Life is but the vigorous self-assertion of the individual determined to subject obstacles to his inner law.<sup>1</sup> We are exposed to a thousand influences, but of all none are as potent as character. It is character that

<sup>1</sup> "It is indeed, a remarkable fact," says Prof. William James, "that sufferings and hardships do not, as a rule, abate the love of life; they seem, on the contrary, to give it a keener zest. The sovereign source of melancholy is repletion."

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

‘ makes us what we are, and as all created beings represent merely force in action, man’s best possession is the energy with which he asserts himself, even though it be but energy imposed upon him from without. If it does not spring spontaneously from his own breast, let him, by a supreme effort, put himself in a condition where his will *must* obey.

Feuchtersleben claims for the human will not only an inherent power of resistance to deleterious influences, but would have us exercise our will power aggressively, so as to keep the body in good health. He quotes approvingly the saying of Rahel:<sup>1</sup> “We can recover our health only when we are seized with supreme disgust at the thought of sickness and feel in every fibre of our being that it is beautiful and fitting to be healthy.”

<sup>1</sup> Rahel Levin (1771-1833), one of the most brilliant women of her day, who married in 1814 the writer Varnhagen von Ense. She was the centre of attraction in the literary circles of Berlin.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

This is in keeping with the teachings of Lavater,<sup>1</sup> who in one of the most striking chapters in his *Physiognomic Fragments* attempts to show that there exists a visible harmony between moral and physical beauty, as there is between moral and physical ugliness. By this is meant not the fleeting, external charm of beauty, but the spirit that gives it life and permanence. It can scarcely be doubted that nature, in framing the human body, provided all the conditions for its fullest development, and that the workings of the intellect are in strict consonance with physical laws. It follows therefrom that in so far as the mind influences the development of the body, that influence will manifest itself in bodily beauty as well as in bodily health. Emotional habits and the exercise of the will determine character and guide the spontaneous movements of the muscles, hence

<sup>1</sup> Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801), founder of the "art of physiognomy," a philosophical mystic of considerable renown in his day.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

they determine the facial features, which express what we generally call beauty or its opposite. Every oft-repeated facial trait, be it smiling, crying, twitching, sneering or frowning, leaves its trace in the soft parts of the face, recording, as it were, what has taken place, and making each successive reproduction of the act easier, until finally the imprint on the muscles and tissues becomes permanent. And the play of the muscles cannot continue long without leaving its traces on the underlying bony structure. Passionate persons have in old age far more facial wrinkles than those of a placid disposition; their skin is much more frequently contracted and expanded by their gestures, and the resulting lines remain for ever.<sup>1</sup>

What takes place in the tender parts which give the face its expression, occurs equally in all the other organs of the human

<sup>1</sup> "There are mystically in our faces certain characters which carry in them the motto of our souls, wherein he that cannot read A B C may read our natures."—Sir Thomas Browne: *Religio Medici*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

system. When we are freed from oppressive care we draw a deep breath, and the chest necessarily expands in doing so. Repeated action of this kind is certain to affect favourably the respiratory organs. On the other hand, he whose circulation is impeded by depressing emotional suffering and who continues to languish, will not escape the consequences of such a condition, as shown in diminished secretion, impaired nutrition, etc. The earlier in life and the more frequently such conditions occur—the greater their intensity and their influence upon the temperament of the individual—the more inevitable and the more plainly manifest will be the imprint, in form and action, upon the body throughout life. The human organism represents a living circle, all parts of which work together in close inter-action. The story told by the pale, wrinkled face is also betrayed by the feeble voice, the faltering step, the characterless handwriting, the irresolute mood, by susceptibility to

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

changes of weather, and the liability to the inroads of disease. The body is poisoned, or—as the case may be—preserved and healed by the products of the seed sown by the mind. Beauty itself is in a certain sense but the outward token of health; the harmony of all bodily functions shows itself in the harmonious result—beauty of form. If thus virtue beautifies and vice vitiates, who will deny that virtue preserves health, while vice promotes disease?

Nature's judgments are secret; they are rendered slowly, but infallibly; she keeps account even of those transgressions which shun the eyes of men and are not amenable to their laws. Her actions, eternal as everything that emanates from the source of all power, extend from generation to generation, and the late descendant, who despairingly broods over the secret of his sufferings, may find the solution in the sins of his forefathers. But, in proportion as we recognise that weakness and disease are due to

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

moral rather than physical causes shall we approach the cure; only we must begin with practices of a much higher sort than cold baths and the hardening of our children in accordance with the theories of Rousseau and other reformers. Physicians, who are often charged with being too materialistic, may meet the reproach by taking a hint from the moralist and the priest. The true physician will see the road to salvation as clearly as they.

There are human beings so happily endowed by nature that their moral development proceeds with great ease; they may be said to possess moral genius, just as we speak of genius in art. Such exceptional beings were Marcus Aurelius, Socrates, Howard, and Penn. In individuals possessing this endowment the harmony of their existence will unmistakably manifest itself, even where, as in the case of Socrates, the struggle of the mind with the imperfections of the body is apparent. The



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

scattered rays of an inner light, illumining, as it were, the body, are all the more glorious to behold. The saying of Apollonius, "There are blossoms even in wrinkles," is as true to-day as of yore.

Modern psychologists, says Feuchtersleben, reproach those of a former day with having split up and destroyed, as it were, the unity of the human mind by ascribing to it a number of greater and lesser functions, such as reason, intellect, higher and lower desires, imagination, memory, etc. In so far as these so-called functions were represented as agencies acting according to special laws, the criticism is well-founded; for the human intellect is a complete and indivisible whole, and its apparent parts are but the various forms of its activity. These forms, however, are clearly distinct from each other, and may well be considered each by itself. The sum and substance of all our activities is revealed in but three ways: we are able to think, to feel, and to will.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

This makes up the whole of man, the essence of his nature and his aims. In philosophic language, it comprises "the totality of his reasoning, imagining, and striving." Thoughts are, as it were, the food, emotions the atmosphere, and the acts of the will the propelling force of our intellectual life. Let us consider each of the three ways in which the soul may counteract the ills that threaten the body.

Assuming that there is a progressive order in the realm of the mind, we shall assign the lowest rank to the imagination and the highest to reason, the will occupying a place between the two. Such at least is the order in which the functions of the mind are developed during life. The child lets his imagination run riot,<sup>1</sup> youth has its yearn-

<sup>1</sup> "The thought forces itself upon us," says Goethe, "how important it is in the process of education not to neglect the imagination, but to regulate it, and to awaken through it by the early presentation of noble images the love of the beautiful, the desire for what is admirable."—*Annalen*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

ings, man thinks. If it be true that nature progresses from the lesser to the greater, it is evident that the order of development must be as indicated.

Imagination, indeed, bridges over the gulf between the physical and the spiritual world—a mysterious, changeful, enigmatic force, which we do not know whether to assign to the body or the soul, and of which it is difficult to say whether we are governed by it or rule over it. One thing, however, is certain, that because of its relative position in the development of the mind it is peculiarly adapted to transmit the sensations of the mind to the body, and therefore, as a connecting link, possesses the greatest importance. If we observe closely what passes within us we shall find that neither thought nor desire affects our body directly, but that both manifest themselves only when touched by imagination—a fact of considerable significance to the psychologist and the physician. Imagination is the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

moving and fructifying force of the intellectual organism and connects its various parts with one another. Without it our ideas, however abundant, would become stagnant, our conceptions would remain rigid and lifeless, our sensations coarse and sensual.

Kant has said that the propelling power of imagination is more direct than that of any merely mechanical agency. He remarks that he who is very fond of social pleasures will eat with far greater appetite than one who has spent two hours on horseback, and cheerful books he believes to be more conducive to health than physical exercise. In this sense he considers dreaming as a sort of exercise in sleep, provided by nature in order to keep the wheels of the human system going.

The power of imagination consists merely in the ability to grasp the non-real, and with this ability are implanted in us the germs of happiness or misery. If the growth of the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

imagination is unchecked, we walk in day dreams and stand at the threshold of insanity. Yet imagination exercises its slow and continuous influence on all of us. We may say that it dwells within us before we are conscious of our existence, and it almost survives us, as in all those conditions where reflection is overpowered by obscure imaginings. It is most potent in infancy and it is with us in sleep and insanity. As the outer world surrounds us with its unnumbered influences, so imagination fills our inner being with its boundless wealth. Hence how can its activity fail to be decisive for health or illness? "Many an hour," says Lichtenberg,<sup>1</sup> "have I spent in giving full rein to my fancy, and I should never have reached the age I did had I not steeped myself in that bath of imagination at the season when people usually go to watering-places."

<sup>1</sup> George Christoph Lichtenberg (1742-99), a German physicist, critic, and satirist, celebrated for his discoveries in the field of electricity.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Our sentiments are at work while we give scope to our imagination, and here lies the opportunity of the observant physician. We have all heard stories of the miraculous curative power of the imagination in disease, and we are only too familiar with the part imagination plays in bringing on disease or aggravating it where it exists; may we not then assume that what can cause and cure disease, can also prevent it?<sup>1</sup> How great and serious is the suffering of those unfortunate beings who in their fixed imagination

<sup>1</sup> "Everyone knows the power of imagination. No one doubts that there are imaginary diseases, and that many persons suffer from nothing but the fact that they imagine they are ill. Is it therefore not just as easily possible—and is it not infinitely better—to imagine that one is well? And will not this strengthen and preserve health as effectually as the contrary will promote illness?"—Hufeland.

"There are endless ways in which psychical influence may work towards the general health and towards the victory over bodily disease, and all that may be acknowledged without the slightest concession to the metaphysical creeds of mental healers and Christian Scientists."—Münsterberg: *Psychotherapy*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

surrender themselves to a threatened or existing evil! Sooner or later what they fear overtakes them. The physiological cause of this phenomenon lies in the constant nervous excitation of the organ concerned, with its direct sequels. There is on record the case of a pupil of Boerhave, who went through the most terrible experiences in the course of his medical studies, because all the morbid conditions which the eloquent teacher so vividly depicted gradually made their appearance in his own body. After having suffered from various fevers and inflammatory diseases during his winter course, and from nervous affections during the summer, he thought it advisable to give up a profession which had brought him to the brink of the grave. The imaginary cases of hydrophobia and cholera, at a time when the popular mind is filled with anxiety on these subjects, are further illustrations of the same phenomenon. While studying ophthalmology, says Feuchtersleben, the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

future oculist sometimes sees *mouches volantes* (floating black specks) before his eyes, which may thereby become actually weakened, and his imagination may even conjure up the spectre of a cataract.

If we turn to the comforting consideration of the many cases where an actual cure is brought about by a purely imaginary agency—have we not all heard of bread pills and their marvellous effect?—we must ask ourselves, Is the cure less real because due to imagination? Feuchtersleben cites an amusing case in point. An English physician, who had been vainly treating a man suffering from temporary paralysis of the tongue, thought he would try in his case an instrument, invented by himself, on whose efficacy he built high hopes. In order to ascertain first the temperature of the tongue, he inserted under it a small pocket thermometer. The patient, believing that this was the new instrument which was to cure him, assured the doctor after a few minutes, with



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

every manifestation of delight, that he could now move his tongue, and proceeded to do so. Was he, asks Feuchtersleben, less able to move the tongue because it was only his imagination that had cured him?

The peculiar phenomena attending the influence of one mind over another—now known as hypnotism, suggestion, etc.—were designated in Feuchtersleben's days as "animal magnetism." A great deal of interest had been aroused by the report of Foutanier, a French scientist who travelled in Asia in 1824, and wrote from Teheran to a friend in Paris: "What would you say if I told you that the theory of what we call animal magnetism was known to the people of the East long before any one in Europe thought of it? Do you know that there are persons in Asia who make a business of carrying the theory into practice, and are therefore persecuted by the mol-lahs?" The children of the East, says Feuchtersleben, live far more constantly

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

in the world of imagination than we do, hence the mysteries of that realm are better known to them than to us. All the influences which we daily see stronger and richer natures exercise over those less well endowed belong to that realm of wonders, and the results are apparently due merely to the power of imagination. Even the superior intellect influences us only if our imagination is prepared for it. Great minds affect us not because they are always easily understood, but because of the halo which surrounds them and dazzles our imagination.

Many of the most important events that happen in this world are explainable in this way. We are surrounded by a spiritual atmosphere which, like the air we breathe, is inseparable from us. It is so with every generation throughout the ages. In this atmosphere the achievements of every individual are merged in a whole out of which each receives, unconsciously, the impression

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

of the total result. Thoughts, sensations, new ideas, thus float unseen in the air; we breathe them in, assimilate them, and communicate them to others without being clearly aware of the process. The reflection of this atmosphere in history is what is termed the spirit of the times, and the curious phenomena of fashion may be said to be their mirage. This atmosphere creates in social circles a similarity of thought so contagious as to leave its mark even on such of our ideas as we believe to be most original.

Though each of us is but the resultant of the forces at work in our organic whole, the candid observer of his own self must admit that he is most strongly influenced by the vital energy of a single individual, which leaves its stamp upon him. The courage of the hero reanimates like a divine breath his terror-stricken comrades, after trembling fear has spread its contagion. The hearty laugh, the merry mood, irresistibly infect the assembled company, and even the surly

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

misanthrope, fight against it as he may, cannot wholly suppress the smile that steals over his lips. Again, the yawn of a single bored individual creates an epidemic of yawns. What one person in a crowd professes to have seen, all see, and thus it is possible for a number of sane and truthful persons to testify that they have seen the ghost which a medium has conjured up. In an evil sense, as well as for every good purpose, it may be said that faith is all-powerful, and that the age of miracles is not yet past. Think well of your fellowman, and you will find him worthy of your trust; confide in him who is half honest, and he will become wholly so; give your pupil credit for ability, and he will manifest it; consider him incapable of progress, and he will remain so.<sup>1</sup> Believe that you are healthy, and you may become sound. All nature is but an echo of the spirit, and the highest law

<sup>1</sup> "If you would improve anyone," says Goethe, "it is best to begin by persuading him that he is already what you would wish him to be."

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

which she discloses to us is that the ideal may become the real, and that ideas gradually conquer the world.

Imagination, we see, is thus the propelling force in the realm of thought, and it behooves the wise physician to avail himself of this fact in all those cases where the innate stock of imagination is too slender to enable the patient to follow out, of his own initiative, the plans essential for the hygiene of the soul. In other words, the physician will stimulate the feeble will of his patient by imposing upon it his own. "Soulsick," says Hippel,<sup>1</sup> "is everyone whose imagination is weak." Hufeland was right in considering an imagination busy with lovely things among the most important means of prolonging life. "Kalobiotik" (the art of making life beautiful) is thus a part of his famous "Makrobiotik" (the art of prolonging life). Imagination

<sup>1</sup> Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel (1741-96), a German satirist.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

alone can render life beautiful. The sad catastrophes which wrecked gifted writers like Novalis<sup>1</sup> and Kleist<sup>2</sup> could not have occurred if their imagination had not taken a wrong direction, and led to the paralysis of all capacity for enjoyment. The power of the imagination, as it may be the most beneficial, can also become the most dangerous element of our emotional nature. It is a gentle Vestal flame which, if guarded in its virgin purity, gives light and life, but which, freed from restraint, leaves desolation in its path.

It has been vouchsafed to man to nourish as well as subdue the fire of imagination within him by that glorious ingredient of human culture—wit and humour. How wholesome is the power of wit in ridiculing vanity, pedantry, irresolution, and deject-

<sup>1</sup> "Novalis," the assumed name of Friedrich von Hardenberg (1772-1801), a writer of the romantic school, whose troubled life came to an early close.

<sup>2</sup> Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811), the dramatist, who killed himself and the woman he loved.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

tion! It dispels gnawing care, disarms puffed-up pride, and chases away torturing delusion. The momentary cheerfulness to which even the gloomiest mind yields while under the spell of pleasant diversion is of priceless value in cases where no other distraction is of avail. And as the treasures of literature offer their cheering balm, so the entire field of art holds out its sweet consolation. As in our dreams the fatiguing struggle between the intellect and the world of reality gives way to a state of gentle passiveness which replenishes the powers of body and soul, so art creates waking dreams which sustain our dual nature under its most staggering burdens. Music, the creative arts, and persuasive speech appeal to the body as they do to the mind. Of music in particular a keen observer has said that its most important effect is to promote health. For health consists in the full control of all bodily and mental functions, and song and music reanimate our organs, and

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

cause the entire nervous system to vibrate in harmonious accord. Thus every form of art rests on the sense of harmonious relations, and all the arts may become the very basis of health and cheerfulness if, dominated and guided by the intellect, they lead us to peace and contentment. But it is only art in its ennobling forms that can fulfil these functions. The question whether the works of our modern painters and sculptors can inspire us as do the treasures of antiquity, and whether our poets can cheer us as the immortal ones do, has a far greater bearing on the hygiene of the soul than is commonly supposed.



## V

IN speaking of the will as the motive power of the imagination, Feuchtersleben has in mind not the determination to attain one's desire, whether of a higher or a lower kind, but that assertion of individual energy which is the crowning faculty of the soul and, in the last analysis, expresses character.<sup>1</sup> Toward the strengthening of will power the moralist, law-giver and teacher, as well as the physician, must direct their efforts if reason is to exercise that sway on which moral and physical health depends. The task of the physician is often almost completed if he succeeds in arousing the will of his patient. It is idle to attempt to reason with the in-

<sup>1</sup> "The will seldom orders any action, nor is there any voluntary action performed without some desire accompanying it; which I think is the reason why the will and desire are so often confounded."—Locke: *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

sane, to try to show him that his delusion is a phantom, but he can be cured if we succeed in stimulating his activity, in getting him to the point of exercising his will power. And how much more certain will be the result in the case of one who is merely feeble in body and soul, and learns that there is a remedy within him which he can apply as soon as he wills.

The conditions of modern society are often such as to militate against the free exercise of the will, and we are only too prone to excuse our lack of resolution on the score of absentmindedness, inability to come to a decision, momentary distraction,—ominous names all of these, says Feuchtersleben, and fatal to the hygiene of the soul. Nothing leads so easily to final paralysis of will power as the habit of indecision. Even physical collapse may be its ultimate consequence. He relates a striking case in point, on the authority of Marcus Herz, a Berlin physician, famous in the last

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

decades of the eighteenth century. The doctor was treating the writer Moritz,<sup>1</sup> who was to all appearances in the last stages of a consuming fever. The hope which he felt bound to hold out to his patient seemed but to aggravate his condition. He met the physician's statements with expressions of utter despondency, and the struggle between hope and fear sapped the sufferer's last strength. Herz, knowing the character of his patient, decided upon a desperate step. He told him that all hope was indeed gone. The intense excitement into which the sufferer was thrown by this announcement was followed by listless apathy. In the evening the pulse had improved, and a quieter night followed. The fever diminished day by day, and within three weeks the patient was well.

Absentmindedness or want of concentra-

<sup>1</sup> K. P. Moritz (1756-98), a writer on æsthetics, prominent in the "storm and stress" period of German literature.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

tion, so closely related to lack of will power, may be said to correspond to that physical condition known as trembling of the muscles. It is a state of psychical oscillation expressive of the inability of the spirit to pursue a certain aim, and of a desire for constant relaxation and change. And just as bodily weakness finally yields to vigorous impulse, so the will works wonders in overcoming the trembling of the soul. Feuchtersleben found in his own person that a nervous condition in which the printed letters seemed to dance before his eyes disappeared as soon as he fastened his gaze steadily upon the apparently trembling objects. Exactly so can the will overcome the oscillations of the soul. To diversion he opposes concentration. He condemns the popular expedient of resorting to distracting pastimes as a panacea for physical and mental ailments. The contrary, that is to say, the fixing of the will upon a certain activity proceeding from within, is the proper remedy in such cases.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Feuchtersleben is here in close accord with Pascal, who says:

“The only thing which makes us forget our miseries is distraction, yet this in reality is the greatest of all miseries; for it is precisely distraction that keeps us from thinking seriously about ourselves and insensibly destroys us. Without it we should become weary, and weariness would force us to seek a better way out of our troubles. Distraction merely beguiles us and gradually leads to death.”

The dramatist Grillparzer, who in his own person learned to know the torments of indecision, has in a striking passage given poetic utterance to Feuchtersleben's remarks as to the value of concentration:

“Concentered thought? Spoke thus mere accident?  
Or didn't thou fully grasp its meaning, child?  
The word thou utter'st balm is to my ear,  
For thou hast named the world's prodigious lever,  
Which raises what is great a thousand fold,  
And moves the smallest closer to the stars.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

The hero's deed, the poet's holy song,  
The seer's vision, and the hand of God,  
Attention rapt conceives or comprehends.  
Distraction idly mocks what ne'er it grasps."

"Lack of initiative," "poor spirits," "ill-humour," or by whatever name society may dignify insufficient self-control—all are reprehensible alike in the eyes of the philosopher and the physician. Lavater wrote on the moral aspects of ill-humour, Feuchtersleben condemns it from a purely medical point of view. Sadness, he says, is a condition against which no one can always successfully contend, but moroseness is quite a different thing. There may be a certain poetic element in sadness, but moodiness and moroseness lack every element of attraction. They and all their kin have their root in habitual indolence, and the remedy lies in a continuous and wise activity—serious in the hours of work, diverting in leisure moments. Were we not in the habit of passing the fin-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

est morning hours in bed, we should never know that depressing consciousness of being late with which we so often begin the day. Had we from early childhood accustomed ourselves to a pleasant orderliness, our inner being would have acquired a harmony in consonance with our outward actions. If every moment were used in accordance with the fitness of things, there would be no time for being "out of sorts."<sup>1</sup> It is true we cannot always be in the right humour for everything, but we can always be in the right humour for some things. A wise recognition of the value of change of occupation does wonders in keeping off the "vapours." Withdrawal from the world engenders moroseness and, according to Plato, promotes obstinacy. But so does constant living with and in the world; therefore let

<sup>1</sup> "The calm or disturbance of our mind does not depend so much on what we regard as the more important things of life as on a judicious or injudicious arrangement of the little things of daily occurrence."  
—La Rochefoucauld: *Maxims*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

us learn to live both with and without the world, and we shall find in suitable change health and good spirits.

All the various conditions due to ill-regulated nerves may be overcome by will power, just as certain morbid conditions may be brought on by the absence of that power. In the human organism slumber unsuspected forces, which may be awakened by the firm will. The stoicism of the ancients—the purest, loftiest, and most practical of all pre-Christian doctrines—has proved to the world what may be accomplished by will power. Let no one imagine that the disciples of the stoic schools were steeled by cold syllogisms; it was the power of the will that wrought their miracles of endurance.

There is perhaps no more remarkable phenomenon in the development of man's nature than the influence of abstract thought on his concrete organism through that connecting link which may be termed "intel-



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

lectual emotion." In the existence of such emotion, side by side with the ethico-religious sentiment, lies the root of all humanitarianism. Individuals of a lower order do not think in connection with what they feel; persons in whom the intellect unduly predominates think without reference to emotion; only those who have attained a high degree of both intellectual and moral culture think and feel as man ought to. But everything depends on what we mean by "culture." The sickly scholar and the robust ignorant peasant represent alike human types in the composition of which important elements of culture are wanting, even though the scholar may have neglected his body because of his deep interest in mathematical problems, and the peasant may know enough to be a good citizen. True culture consists in the harmonious development of all our faculties, and in it alone lie health, happiness, and wisdom.

The principal reason for a chronic, ill-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

defined state of invalidism must often be sought in an exaggerated attention to the concerns of the body, and no surer way of counteracting this evil can be found than by turning the attention toward higher intellectual and spiritual aims. Nothing is more pitiful than to observe a petty mind eternally busy with the care of its material welfare, which this very care is undermining day by day. Patients recruited from this class, who are despised by their own physicians, die from sheer longing to live. And why? Because they lack spiritual and intellectual culture, which alone could have given them mastery over their miserable physical state.

Greater even than those wonderful disciples of stoicism who owe their spiritual triumphs to force of will, are those lofty and serene minds the range of whose interests embraces every form of sane enjoyment open to man. Of such was preëminently Goethe. Spinoza, often considered the most

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

austere of philosophers, said: "It is impossible to overdo gaiety of spirits, for every sort of gaiety is of value; sadness, however, is ever an evil." And he also said: "The more we cultivate our intelligence, the happier we become."

It is interesting to find Schopenhauer turning from the darker aspects of life and coinciding with Feuchtersleben's view of the philosophic value of serenity. "Nothing," he says, "conduces so directly to happiness as cheerfulness. It is a quality which is its own immediate reward. He who is gay has always a reason for being so, namely, the fact that he is gay. Cheerfulness alone can make up for the loss of every other possession, while nothing can take its place. We may be young, handsome, rich, and high in station; still, in estimating our happiness, the question will be asked: Are we cheerful with it all? But if we see a person who is cheerful, no matter whether he be young, or old, straight of limb or deformed, poor

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

or rich, he is happy. Therefore let us open wide the door to cheerfulness whenever it knocks. It can never come amiss. Instead of thinking thus, however, we often hesitate whether to admit it at all, and begin to reflect whether we really have every cause for contentment, or fear that gaiety will disturb our serious thoughts and anxious problems. But what good these will do is very uncertain, while cheerfulness is a direct gain."

If thus mere thoughtless gaiety, the unconscious expression of a natural elasticity of spirits, can become a salutary and sustaining force, how much more powerful will be the stimulus of the conscious feeling that we have made the most of our endowments and opportunities and live our lives sanely, as complete parts of a harmonious whole.

If we observe the hypochondriac closely and with an unprejudiced eye, we shall find that his condition consists at bottom of a dull, sad egotism. He lives, thinks and suffers only for his pitiful little self. He turns

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

away from everything that is beautiful in nature and man and—what is worse—from the sufferings of his fellowmen, and so far from taking that philosophical view to which nothing human is foreign, becomes a stranger to everything human. If it be important to act upon such a mind before it sinks into final darkness, how much more important is it to counteract in time that tendency toward gloomy dissatisfaction which lurks in so many of us. Self-control, which is nothing else than a wise moderation, is the lever which lifts the mind into willing obedience to law—the source of all real contentment.

Nothing conduces to inward serenity so much as the contemplation of the eternal works of nature. The Brahmin, oblivious of his self in his devotion to the problems of the universe, passes his days in frugal contentment, and attains a span of life vouchsafed to few of his restless fellowmen in other parts of the world. Kant, to whom

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

nature had given a frail body, wrested from her permanent health by thinking great thoughts. Wieland,<sup>1</sup> than whom few have lived a more harmonious life, has shown that the vivid imagination of the poet may accompany the uniform development of all the other intellectual powers, and lead to the happiest and healthiest old age. Nothing is more salutary than to regard those luminous minds that triumphed over advancing years. Plato studied and taught till nearly eighty; Sophocles wrote his *Oedipus at Colonus* when still older; Cato retained his active interest in public affairs till his death, at eighty-five; Isocrates composed brilliant orations at the age of ninety-three; Fleury, at ninety, still guided the destinies of France, and Goethe's vision ranged undimmed over the universe until

<sup>1</sup> Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813), one of the most prominent writers of the classic period of German literature, the friend of Goethe and Herder, chiefly known for his romantic epic *Oberon*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

death closed his eyes in his eighty-third year.

Let us not rashly assume that the spirit of the modern age is opposed to the harmonious development of body and mind, that diminished physical power is a necessary concomitant of the universal spread of intelligence. Cultivation of the intellect alone, it is true, is not culture; but where judicious reading, stimulating conversation, independent thinking, and the free play of the imagination, are joined to a firm will, the result is to-day, as of yore, sound physical health. Truly cultured, that is to say, sagacious and clear-minded persons, are far less prone to complaining about physical ailments and mental depression than those whose horizon includes nothing more prominent than their bodily concerns. With Brigham,<sup>1</sup> Feuchtersleben believes that the

<sup>1</sup> Amariah Brigham (1798-1849), an American physician, whose treatises on insanity and diseases of the brain were authoritative in their day. He

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

progress of that civilisation in which the cultivation of the arts goes hand in hand with moral and intellectual enlightenment, and in which rational diversions occupy as important a place as sane temperance measures, is certain to lead to decreased mortality and heightened physical welfare.

wrote: *Influence of Mental Cultivation on the Health, and Influence of Religion upon the Health and Physical Welfare of Mankind.*



## VI

MUCH has been said regarding the weight that must be attached to individual temperament in judging of character. There are in reality, says Feuchtersleben, but two temperaments—the active and the passive. Temperament represents merely the sum of inborn tendencies, and those tendencies determine the strength or weakness of the will. If the will conquers, the result is a pronounced character; if it succumbs, passion rules. The indolent temperament is much more difficult to deal with than one fed by too active an imagination, for on activity alone depends the hygiene of the soul. Indifference is death, while passion of whatever kind is at least force, that is to say, life. Education must take careful account of such forces as happen to come under its influence. Whatever it finds must

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

be studied and regulated, and not ignored or suppressed. We all feel how wholesome the free stirrings of the soul are. If the passions, that is to say, our heightened natural tendencies, had no other value, they would still be useful in counteracting each other. Reflection alone will never overcome, though it may subdue, a strong impulse; but passion is opposed to passion, as love to pride, and pride to love. Nature, the wisest and safest educator, guides us by means of our inborn inclinations. A sudden joy stimulates us, but exhaustion follows stimulation. Continuous serenity, however, sustains and furthers all the processes of organic life. Fiery anger stimulates, as does sudden joy, but a noble indignation sustains, as does serenity. Anger lowers us in the eyes of our antagonist and puts us into his power, while a lofty scorn lifts us above him. Thus ethics goes hand in hand with hygiene. Plato spoke of the passions as "the fevers of the soul," which purify it of all the evil

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

rooted therein. Our better impulses, however, have an ever higher function, and of all none is as important for the hygiene of the soul as hopefulness, the tenderest of all our endowments.

Feuchtersleben draws an important distinction between unrestrained and restrained passion. The former he calls passive, as is everything that succumbs to the purely sensuous, while passion controlled by intelligence is active in the truest sense, that is to say, in accord with reason. Violent rage stifles our power of expression and renders the best part of our nature passive, or suffering.<sup>1</sup>

Is it necessary to dwell on the physical effects of powerful emotions, whether for good or evil? Physicians dare not consciously subject the human organism to those violent shocks to which emotional

<sup>1</sup> "Qualities carried to excess," says Pascal, "are inimical to us and not apparent to the senses; we do not feel them, but are merely passive under their influence."

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

excitement exposes it—sometimes, as the annals of medicine record, with extraordinarily beneficial results.<sup>1</sup> Boerhave speaks of having cured epilepsy in the Haarlem poorhouse by acting upon the fear of a patient, and ancient history records the story of the mute son of Cræsus, who, when he saw the sword of the enemy drawn against his father, regained his speech and exclaimed: “Do not kill Cræsus!” Who does not know the clear, sparkling eye, the rapid pulse, the full breath of the joyous, the faltering voice, the trembling, the pallor of the terror-stricken, the halting step, the clammy skin, the weak pulse of the despondent?

The influence of blasted hope upon the

<sup>1</sup> The distinguished French physician Pinel observed, according to Hufeland, that “during the general emotional excitement caused by the French Revolution, many persons who had for years been ailing and feeble became strong and healthy, and that, in particular, the usual nervous troubles of the aristocratic leisure class completely disappeared.”

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

body has been dwelt upon by many thoughtful medical observers. The English physician Ramadge ascribed the ravages of consumption in England largely to the fruitless plans and wasted ambitions so common among his countrymen. It is quite conceivable, says Feuchtersleben, that the congestion toward the organs of the chest engendered by sadness may be a contributory cause of phthisis. More certain still are the ravages of remorse, that bitterest and barrenest of all sentiments, which devours its victims physically and mentally.

It is our duty to inform our intellect if we would learn to subdue our passions. The more closely we conform to truth, the freer we are to act, and activity means health. He who cannot master his passions and emotions spends his life in servitude. Tears and sighs are evidences of a weak soul and obstacles in the pursuit of virtue and health. The mind insensibly conforms to such mechanical expressions of inner

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

feebleness. Hence the importance of establishing physical habits to aid in the regeneration of faulty mental traits—experiments that are within the power of every one. Let those prone to act with precipitation accustom themselves to walk and write slowly. The irresolute should try to work rapidly; those who walk about sad-eyed and with bowed head, lost in fanciful day dreams, should be taught to walk erect, look others straight in the face, and to speak in a loud and distinct voice. If we attune our minds to joy we shall do nature's bidding. She has implanted in every organic being the conditions of self-preservation. He who has retained his individual freedom will not waste time in thinking of death. Wisdom lies not in the contemplation of death, but in that of life. We shall live a rational life if we keep from us whatever impedes our action and prevents our enjoyment—hatred, envy, anger, pride and arrogance. There is no more ef-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

fective way of conquering the passions and emotions than by learning to know their causes. All experience shows this. Even grief yields to reason. We mourn those we have loved and lost less when we reflect upon the laws of nature.

Before we arrive at a definite knowledge of the nature of our passions we must establish for ourselves certain principles, and imprint them so firmly on our minds that we may apply them in any emergency that may arise.<sup>1</sup> If, for instance, as the result of our reflection that love is the source of universal happiness, we have adopted the dogma that love can conquer hatred, the wrong done us by some enemy will not easily excite our ire.<sup>2</sup> In thus arranging,

<sup>1</sup> "When the need of each opinion comes, we ought to have it in readiness," says Epictetus.

<sup>2</sup> "Whensoever any man doth trespass against thee, presently consider with thyself what it was that he did suppose to be good, what to be evil, when he did trespass. For this when thou knowest, thou wilt pity him; thou wilt have no occasion either to wonder, or to be angry."—*Meditations of Marcus Aurelius* (Casaubon's translation).

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

as it were, our thoughts beforehand, it is, however, essential to keep before us the good inherent in most things, so that we may ever be animated by a certain feeling of pleasure in translating our thoughts into action. If, for instance, we are conscious of a desire for fame, let us think of the good there is in fame, and of how true fame may be attained; but let us not dwell on false glory, its transitoriness, and on whatever is unpleasant in connection with the subject and may give rise to morbid doubt. The ability to acquire habits is the kindest gift of Providence. Through habit are we enabled to assert the vigour of our individuality, while gradually assimilating what at first was foreign to us. To acquire good habits, bred of a joyous submission to the divinity, is the essence of morality, and hence of the hygiene of the soul.



## VII

IN the preceding pages it is easy to trace the influence of the ancients on Feuchtersleben's philosophy. A striking passage from Epictetus makes this influence still clearer. "It is impossible," says he, "for habits and faculties, some of them not to be produced when they did not exist before, and others not to be increased and strengthened by corresponding acts. In this manner certainly, as philosophers say, also diseases of the mind grow up. For when you have once desired money, if reason be applied to lead to a perception of the evil, the desire is stopped, and a ruling faculty of our mind is restored to the original authority. But if you apply no means of cure, it no longer returns to the same state, but being again excited by the corresponding appearance, it is inflamed to desire quicker than before,

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

and when this takes place continually it is henceforth hardened, and the disease of the mind confirms the love of money. For he who has had a fever, and has been released from it, is not in the same state that he was before, unless he has been completely cured. Something of the kind happens also in diseases of the soul. Certain traces and blisters are left in it, and unless a man shall completely efface them, when he is again lashed on the same places, the lash will produce not blisters, but sores. If then you wish not to be of an angry temper, do not feed the habit; throw nothing on it which will increase it; at first keep quiet, and count the days on which you have not been angry. I used to be in passion; now every second day, then every third, then every fourth. But if you have intermitted thirty days, make a sacrifice to God. For the habit at first begins to be weakened, and then completely destroyed. . . . Every habit and faculty is maintained and increased by the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

corresponding actions. . . . When you have been angry, you must know that not only has this evil befallen you, but that you have also increased the habit, and in a manner thrown fuel upon fire. . . . Generally, then, if you would make anything a habit, do it; if you would not make it a habit, do not do it; but accustom yourself to do something else in place of it.”<sup>1</sup>

Emerson, in his essay on “Compensation,” speaks of the polarity, or action and reaction, in every part of nature, of the dualism that underlies the condition of man. “Every excess,” he says in a famous passage, “causes a defect; every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good. Every faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal penalty put on its abuse. It is to answer for its moderation with its life. For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For everything you have missed, you have gained something

<sup>1</sup> George Long’s translation.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

else; and for everything you gain, you lose something."

Feuchtersleben expresses the same thought as follows: "The life of man, as that of all nature, consists of contrasts, which follow, accompany, and condition each other. There is at work in the universe a law of equilibrium according to which these contrasts are equalised as soon as manifested. . . . In the entire realm of nature there exists no advantage without a defect, no profit without a loss, no ascent without a fall, no discord without harmony. Thus, too, in that microcosm, the life of man, there is constant action and reaction: sleeping and waking, joy and sorrow, inspiration and expiration. The stronger the impulse, the more vigorous the onset of the opposite conditioned by it." If the force or frequency of these contrasts is increased, or if the tendency in any one direction becomes pronounced and permanent, there results a disturbance of that equilibrium without

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

which life cannot exist. It is then all-important to know how to deal with these contrasts. Happy is he who, when old age creeps upon him, can revive youth within his soul, and equally happy he who in the struggle between youth and age, can conserve his remaining strength by undisturbed placidity of temper and emotion. But only he can attain this end who has learned to control himself. It does not suffice to exercise care in the matter of food and drink, to regulate the hours of work and rest, to know by heart Hufeland's *Art of Prolonging Life*; it is necessary to force one's self to acquire moral and intellectual strength, in order to learn the meaning of true health. And the art of self-control is beyond no one.

## VIII

THE desire for pleasure and recreation after serious work is inborn in us and need not be instilled into any mind. Few, however, realise how important a place pain and sorrow occupy in the economy of nature. "What is that mysterious power," asks Salvandy,<sup>1</sup> "which causes a sense of affliction to spring up in the midst of our greatest joys, as though, in tasting of them, we were untrue to our real mission in life?" The question thus raised by a sensitive soul is of hygienic as well as ethical significance. Without pain there would be no pleasure, just as there would be no day without night. Nature has consciously added the thorn to the rose. He who would free us from all sorrow would also deprive us of all pleasure. Care-free persons, whose every wish is

<sup>1</sup> Narcisse Achille Comte de Salvandy (1795-1856), a French historian and *littérateur*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

gratified, and who are not spurred on to an active life, easily become hypochondriacs. Only fools will envy those who, while draining every source of pleasure, feel in the depth of their hearts that there is somehow a gap in their lives which no enjoyment can fill. The wise man will not invite this torturing sentiment, but will welcome the shadows which cross the path of every pilgrim on earth. He will find contentment in that subdued twilight which is alike removed from the glaring day of happiness and the dark night of misery. The longing for a better and more perfect world, so natural to the human breast, is of value only as long as it remains a vague dream. Longings and aspirations are given to man in order to lift his thoughts to a higher sphere, but not to bring that realm down to earthly cognisance. It is our duty not to abandon ourselves to religious yearnings; abuse of devotional sentiment ends in dissatisfaction with the world in which we live. It is a wise

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

institution to have but one Sunday a week. The desire for perfectibility is far more likely to be gratified by one who in resigned contentment takes the world as it is than by him who constantly longs for a more perfect one. Let us not ransack heaven and earth for sources of enjoyment. Permanent satisfaction can be secured only in one way: by devotion to duty and by work. And man's activity is entirely compatible with, nay, is conditioned on, an inner restful serenity, and to this, if we choose, we may all surrender ourselves. A state of half voluntary, half unconscious contentment is that which is most conducive to health. When we are both busy and cheerful, attentive to the world and in accord with it, we are not likely to fall into fitful moods. Such a state of contentment represents the ripest result of culture.

Hypochondria, the opposite of this serenity of the soul, is the saddest and most senseless of all human afflictions. Reason,



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

morality, religion, satire, have in vain exhausted their armouries in attacking it; it survives, unmoved even by the reproach that it is in reality the result of sheer selfishness. It has become fashionable to look upon egotism as proof of a superior intellect. Perhaps the best way of dealing with hypochondria is to show that it is a phantom of the imagination, a mere nothing.

There is, it is true, a form of hypochondria which can be treated only by the physician, but what is commonly understood by that term is a purely imaginary evil, and deserves a harsher name. There would seem to be no need of conjuring up imaginary ailments, since there are enough real ones. All of us are only relatively well. Every one, if he chooses, and has eyes to see, may discover the road that will lead him to his grave, and if he looks about him, with eyes dimmed by an obscure half-knowledge of the world, he will discover the road all the more readily,—and follow it at an accele-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

rated pace. As long as we are well enough to do each day what the day calls for, and can enjoy our rest after the day's work is done, it is our duty—alike from the standpoint of the citizen and that of the physician—to pay no attention to our bodily condition. Pain is an arrogant nothing which becomes something only when we acknowledge its existence. We ought to be ashamed to fondle and nourish it until it overmasters us. It becomes great only because we are small. Who can think of a Themistocles or a Regulus looking at his tongue in a mirror or feeling his pulse? Let us invoke the root of the evil, that it may cure what it causes. Does not the hypochondriac die daily from fear of death? Nothing is more pathetically ludicrous than to see these petty unfortunates who ransack medical books in order to copy prescriptions and rules for the preservation of health. To one of these Dr. Herz once said: "My dear fellow, you will some day die of a mis-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

print." Such hypochondriacs are the human failures whom Plato would banish from the state. They are as old as civilisation.<sup>1</sup>

Kant explained away as a mere nothing the hypochondria which threatened to assail his own clearness of intellect, and pronounced those as lacking in sense who believed in the reality of such an evil. "If any one," he says, "becomes a prey to gloomy moods, let him ask himself whether there is any cause for them. If he finds no cause, or recognises that, while there

<sup>1</sup> "Herodicus," we read in Plato's Republic, "by a combination of training and doctoring found out a way of torturing first and chiefly himself, and secondly, the rest of the world.

"How was that?

"By the invention of lingering death; for he had a mortal disease which he perpetually tended, and as recovery was out of the question, he passed his entire life as a valetudinarian; he could do nothing but attend upon himself, and he was in constant torment whenever he departed in anything from his usual regimen, and so dying hard, by the help of science he struggled on to old age."—*Jowett's Translation.*

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

exists a reason for his anxieties, nothing can be done to remove the effect, he will quietly content himself with this expression of his inner feeling, let his anxieties stay where they are, as though they did not concern him in the least, and go about the business which claims his attention."

A sound resolve, in truth, says Feuchtersleben, and one which worked well, for by brushing aside the nothing—which in his case really meant a narrow chest that did not afford sufficient space to his lungs—the sage of Königsberg managed to attain a respectable old age.<sup>1</sup> The philosopher

<sup>1</sup> Kant's own words are: "Owing to my flat and narrow chest, which did not afford sufficient scope to the movements of the heart and lungs, I had a natural inclination toward hypochondria, which in earlier years bordered on disgust with life. But by reflecting that the causes of this difficulty in breathing were perhaps merely mechanical, and therefore irremediable, I succeeded in ignoring it completely. Thus, while my chest felt oppressed, there was peace and serenity in my head, and this state of my mind expressed itself when I was with others quite naturally and intentionally, and not (as in the case of hypo-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Lichtenberg thought of his own whimsies and moods very much as Kant did. "There are," he says, "serious illnesses of which one can die, and there are others of which one does not die, but which one can recognise and feel without much effort, and finally there are those which one cannot see without a microscope. But seen through the microscope they look horrible. The name of that microscope is hypochondria."

A hypochondriacal delusion very common in former days was the belief of delicate persons that they were doomed to die of consumption—a belief fostered by sentimental chondriacs) according to varying moods. And since one enjoys life more by *doing*, to the full extent of one's opportunities, than by giving one's self up to pleasure, mental activity, which engenders a sort of heightened consciousness of life, can overcome obstacles that concern the body alone. The oppression of the chest has remained with me, for its cause lies in my bodily constitution; but I have conquered its influence on my thoughts and actions, by turning my attention away from my physical sensations, as though they did not concern me in the least."—*Von der Macht des Gemüths*, etc.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

novels, with their hectic heroes and heroines. More than a century ago the German physician Weikard spoke of a certain species of mental aberration as "imaginary consumption." Hippel suggested as a remedy for the imaginary ailments of the hypochondriac inoculation with a real disease. "Let the patient get sick, so that he may know what sickness is, and he will get well." In whatever light we may consider the wretched plight of the hypochondriac, says Feuchtersleben—whether we call it weakness, delusion, laziness, stupidity, selfishness, disease, or incipient insanity—activity is the only cure for it, and it is a cure that ought to be recommended with very little ceremony. Those whose ailments are purely imaginary neither excite nor deserve pity, and there is no reason why they should not be plainly told that they are intolerable and unfit for human society. Heroic treatment like this may sometimes end the matter much more quickly than all fine-spun philo-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

sophical arguments. We have the moral right to plague those that plague us, and we are, moreover, rude only for the good of the patient.

Besides selfishness and indolence, habits of pedantry are among the chief causes of hypochondria. Such habits are often misinterpreted, being overlooked where they may be found in full flower, or wrongly attributed to individuals who are quite free from them. Pedantry in this sense does not consist in exaggerated devotion to minute matters of orderliness and punctuality, but in that littleness of mind which loses sight of the end while reaching out for the means, and makes of us slaves to self-created or conventional idols. The true pedant is not the secluded scholar who shuns society because he prefers to it the companionship of his books, but he who prizes the conventionalities of literature more than the world of thought, of which the book is merely the symbol. Such a pedant is he to whom a

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

particular edition of Aristotle is of greater importance than his teachings, and who venerates not the spirit of antiquity, but the mere records of the past because it is the past. The most absurd of all the varieties of the pedant is he who least of all dreams that he can be reckoned among such—the drawing-room fop, whose life-breath is fashion and all the petty formalities which, from having been the means of facilitating agreeable social intercourse, have been elevated by ignorant custom into the chief aim and end of existence. To such an one the trifles of life have become the reality and realities mere trifles.

Let us turn to the melancholy of great men, which has so often been commented upon. Aristotle's observation that "men of profound and noble mind are generally inclined to sadness" has been taken as an axiom. We think of Camoëns, Tasso, Young, and Byron as wrapt in gloom. The hypochondria of Camoëns and Tasso



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

has been used as the subject of dramatists, and we are moved by their sufferings, as we are by the sorrows of Young and Byron. But all this has no bearing on the everyday world about us. Let great men express and explain, as best they may, the nature of their feelings; but let us not mistake the moroseness and mawkishness of the modern writer for evidence of genius.

The hypochondriac, no matter what his mental endowments, is always an egotist. Poets, accustomed to analyse their feelings and to look upon themselves as exceptional beings, are particularly liable to distorted views of life. Cultivate sympathy with the world, says Feuchtersleben, study history, and you will cease to magnify your petty vexations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Goethe, like Feuchtersleben, emphasises (in one of his talks with Chancellor Müller) the danger of cultivating the habit of dissatisfaction. "What everlasting opposition and churlish criticism and negation can lead to, we see in Knebel; they have made of him one of the unhappiest of men. His soul is,

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

as it were, eaten up by a canker. You cannot live with him in peace for two consecutive days, because he attacks everything you cherish. . . . Whatever we nourish in our hearts is certain to grow; such is the eternal law of nature. There is within us an organ of malevolence and discontent, just as there is one of opposition and doubt. The more we feed and cultivate it, the more powerful it grows, until it turns into a festering ulcer, whose pernicious presence consumes our very life-blood. Then follow remorse, self-reproach and other absurdities, and we become unjust toward ourselves and others. We lose all pleasure in whatever we ourselves or others may accomplish, and in our despair finally look for the cause of our misery in the world without, instead of finding it in our own perversity. The essential thing is to look at every person, every occurrence objectively, take them as they really are, and to step out of ourselves, in order to return to our inner self freer than ever."—*Unterhaltungen mit dem Kanzler Friedrich von Müller.*

## IX

THE greatest remedy for all human ills, and hence the best preventive of evil, lies in these two words—truth and nature. An absolutely free and pure existence is not given to us, surrounded as we are on all sides by the conventionalities and falsehoods of social life. These we cannot escape from, and we must, within well-defined limits, even pay a certain deference to them. But it is the height of folly to add to the fetters imposed upon us by others a constraint from within. This it is which gradually but surely undermines our health, and none of us are free from guilt in this respect. There is but one morality: truth, and but one depravity: falsehood. Life and health lie in the former, destruction in the latter. If we do constant violence to our better feelings we undermine the very roots of our exist-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

ence, and yet we take a morbid pleasure in pampering what devours us. We foolishly look upon the super-refinement of our civilisation, with its complicated untruths, as proof of our highest development. No one has the courage to be himself, and yet health of body and mind is conditioned on the ability to assert individual character against constraint. The need of being true to one's self is emphasised alike by the philosopher and the physician. Playing a part through life must wear us out prematurely, even though, with our last breath, we could exclaim with Augustus: "Applaud, my friends!" Hufeland has compared this condition of constant acting to a slow, consuming fever. Why, then, do we submit to it? Is it not far more easy to be true to one's self, to appear what one really is? Every man ought to know that there is no strength without truth, and every woman that there is no beauty without it. Moreover, that wonderful power whose mysteri-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

ous manifestations are so puzzling to us—genius itself is nothing but truth.

But how can we escape the falsehoods that surround us on all sides? By turning to nature. The enjoyment and study of nature supply us with that atmosphere in which thrives what is best in us. Casanova,<sup>1</sup> perhaps the most thoroughgoing votary of pleasure that ever lived, after having drained the cup of every possible enjoyment to the dregs, finally came to the conclusion that “the greatest joys are those which leave the peace of the soul undisturbed.” And indeed there are but two real sources of enjoyment—the cultivation of the mind and the study of nature. The two go hand in hand, for the beauty and grandeur of nature cannot unfold themselves to our senses without elevating and broadening the mind. After saying all that can be said in praise of the society of our fellow-

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Giacomo Casanova de Seingalt (1725-1798), an Italian adventurer, famous for his cynical *Memoirs*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

men—and we cannot forget that it teaches us the greatest lesson we can learn, namely, to do our duty—it remains true that only in the companionship of nature can we find true happiness. Of all classes of scholars, naturalists live longest and enjoy the happiest old age. Just as genuine love of nature, in order to be truly fruitful, requires of us a childlike disposition, so, in turn, fondness for nature begets in her devotees a peculiar childlike simplicity, and restores to them their youth. Every intellectual effort is, in the last analysis, an inquiry into the laws of nature; and we retain mental health and happiness only by thinking and acting in accordance with these laws, thus bringing our inner life into harmony with the harmony of all nature. Even the savage instinctively recognises the truth of this, for nature has implanted in his breast a sense of her beauty, just as she has implanted it in the heart of every child. Beyond this even a Newton cannot go, as he contemplates the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

wonders of the universe, and only in this way do all created beings answer the purpose of nature—that they learn to know their place and find satisfaction in filling it. Every one of us is like Antæus, receiving strength from loving contact with Mother Earth. Nature recognises and reinforces whatever individual capacity we possess; she excites no passions, but rather counteracts them and makes apparent their futility. She educates us gently, but surely and ceaselessly.

Communion with nature develops all the powers within us. She addresses herself to every part of our organic being, filling our imagination with lofty images, and restraining the will, while giving it iron firmness. Her vast silence instructs us; the grand but simple workings of her eternal laws awaken in us fruitful thought, the unvarying course of her events establishes our mental equilibrium; the beauties which she scatters in endless profusion across our path, in lovely

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

blossoms as in the starry skies, dispel our petty cares and selfish anxieties; her greatness lifts us above our own self, until all our feelings, thoughts and desires, merge in the contemplation of the universe, which in turn leads us gently to religion—the highest sentiment of which man is capable. But while all moral and intellectual efforts tend to fit into the universal plan, we must keep in mind that the individual is called upon to cultivate his own narrow field, and to bestow on it the same care which the husbandman gives to his little farm; for each of us can do no more than perform the part assigned to him.

In summing up the lessons which his *Hygiene of the Soul* endeavours to inculcate, Feuchtersleben lays stress on the necessity, for purely practical reasons, of starting with the belief that the mind possesses the power to influence the body. "I shall leave it to theorists," he says, "to explain the mystery of this influence; I am only con-



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

cerned with the practical task of proving its possibility by actual facts." A firm belief in the power of the mind over the body is, however, not the only prerequisite of mental and physical health. We must acquire the art of looking at ourselves objectively. He who constantly watches his bodily condition turns into a self-tormentor and may end in madness, while he who goes his way heedless of himself will never acquire self-control. Yet let us not take our task too seriously. A cheerful glance at ourselves is all that is necessary, for a species of sane self-irony is the sum and substance of the true philosophy of life. Let us strengthen our will, learn to concentrate our attention, cultivate our æsthetic sense, "pray for a pure heart and great thoughts," and study nature—thus shall we enjoy peace of mind, which means happiness.

## X

FEUCHTERSLEBEN appended to his treatise a number of "Leaves from a Diary"—reflections bearing more or less directly on the subject of the hygiene of the soul. A number of these are herewith presented in literal translation.

"Poems, novels, and plays," Feuchtersleben says by way of introduction, "have a distinct advantage over purely didactic works in that they do not weary the reader by exhausting the subject, but stimulate him by suggesting problems that challenge thought. If I have been tiresome in the preceding pages, I shall attempt in what follows to avail myself of the advantages enjoyed by the writers of the class mentioned. Aphorisms are more apt to stimulate than to satisfy, to excite thought than to give it."

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Life presents to the observant mind tasks and problems on every side. Wise books and men of experience stand ready to instruct us. We must look everywhere for sources of peace and strength. What we thus acquire, by selecting and adopting what suits best our purposes, becomes our property fully as much as what we conceive to be ours as the result of independent thought. For, after all, no one invents anything. In thinking for himself each individual merely conforms to the universal law of thought inherent in all. We are surrounded by an atmosphere of truth, from which we draw our breath and to which we return what we have received.

Goethe remarks that "an over-sensitive conscience, magnifying its own importance, may induce hypochondria, unless counter-balanced by constant activity"—a thought which has an important bearing on our subject.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

We may also profit by the saying of another German author: "If we wish to keep body and mind in perfect health, we must learn early to take an active part in the general concerns of our fellowmen."

Only those possessed of a vigorous mind and a thoroughly trained character will be able to maintain an inner calm in times of perturbation, a quiet haven of meditation, as it were, in which the physical being is lifted into the world of thought and learns to enjoy the true happiness vouchsafed to man.

Every activity must be governed by three rules in order to be truly fruitful:

It must be measured in its pace, without rest, but without haste.

It must proceed from a love of the right subject, at the right time—not *invitâ Minervâ*.

It must alternate with repose and change

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

of subject. Our mind is so constituted that we find in change greater relaxation than in repose.

We can easily see that the deification of pleasure yields less actual enjoyment than that view of life which assigns to pleasure a more modest value. The former philosophy leads unavoidably to weariness of life, the latter can alone cure it.

It is not wholesome to offer words of consolation to those whose mind is properly constituted. Such consolation can only be weakening. In duty alone can be found true consolation. Those who long for the infinite misconceive the finite, and hence the object of their existence, which lies not in the world beyond. Mental sufferings are too often but the natural penalty of our having been untrue to nature.

Life is interesting only if we constantly

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

observe, think and learn. These steady currents within us keep us from decaying. To cease to strive and learn, no less than to cease to "love and err," is to cease to live.

"Oh, what a noble mind is here o'er-thrown!" There is no deeper moral anguish than is expressed in these words. The obliteration of self, in the struggle with the eternal powers, can go no further. And yet no sorrow is more common. Oh, would that every gentle and tender soul might cultivate that hardness of fibre so essential in the struggle with the material powers of this world!

Patience accompanies gentleness as its guardian angel, while force is driven by impatience to its ruin.

Patience, thou sober sister of hope, and beneficent balm of the mind, how wondrous thy power to will *not* to will, and to cure

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

through suffering! What unfortunate sufferer has not been touched by thy magic if fortunate enough to conjure it up? What physician does not know that the paroxysm of fever flies before thy presence, while it returns with redoubled force when thou forsakest the sick? Thou canst assuage the acutest pain and hasten the most tedious recovery; thou alone givest strength to the weak, thou, the most perfect, as thou art the most beautiful, manifestation of the healing power of the soul within us!

Hypochondria means egotism. Poets, accustomed to delve into the recesses of their own hearts, to analyse their innermost feelings, and to look upon themselves as the centre of the universe, often become a prey to this demon. I knew one of these highly but fatally gifted beings, who found temporary relief from his torments only by turning to the study of history and interesting himself in the happenings of the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

great world. These sympathies would surely have brought about his cure had he not sought the remedy too late.

Scepticism, the gloomy, petty scepticism of the worldling, is nothing but weakness, a feeble resignation in the face of difficulties which the brave man boldly encounters and which faith alone can hope to overcome. Half-informed physicians are generally sceptics.

In the faithful performance of our appointed task lies the root of a pure conscience, which leads to peace; and in peace alone grows to maturity the tender flower of earthly happiness.

Seek the company of those who stimulate you to continue in your chosen life-work and give you added strength. Avoid as you would poison those who leave in you a sense of emptiness and debility.



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Books are spectacles through which we look upon the world. They aid weak eyes, but the strong are better preserved by a free and natural outlook upon life.

Sorrow and mourning spring from within and undermine the human organism. Vexation from without restores the disturbed equilibrium better than anything else.

If we succeed in concentrating our attention upon any definite object, be it pleasant conversation or a book, the calling up of the past, or the consciousness of duty, sorrow and pain will lose their sting. The effect will be all the more certain if the impulse proceed from others, without our being aware of it.

A determined effort to seek distraction defeats its own end. If we constantly have in mind the purpose of turning our attention away from a certain object, we merely

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

think of it all the more intently. But if we concentrate our interest on another object, the first recedes from our view without any effort.

Negation is valuable only if we substitute one thing for another. This law is of the greatest importance, not only for the hygiene of the soul, but for all the concerns of life. Negation of what is vulgar, vicious, false, and ugly is possible only if we put in its place the uplifting, noble, true and beautiful. It is a fatal mistake to regard those defects as realities and attempt to combat them. We must proceed as though they did not exist, and create something real.

A moderate optimism, such as springs from a true philosophy of life, is one of the essentials of the hygiene of the soul. He who is dissatisfied with the world will be dissatisfied with himself, and such a state of mind must result in danger to health and lack of interest in life.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

There is no one to whom some unexpected good has not come at one time or another. Let us remember this, and we shall not despair of the future. Recollection will become, in the language of the poet, "the nurse of hope."

It is beyond our power to escape from our varying moods, but we may put them to use as does the poet. He gives them artistic form and shapes them, as the sculptor shapes the block of marble.

I recently had a vivid experience as to the influence of daylight on the disposition. The night-lamp in my bedroom was burning with unusual brightness, and when I awoke I did not know what time it was. The serious, even gloomy, thoughts which usually come to me at night took possession of my mind, and made sleep impossible. Suddenly the clock struck five, and I realised that what I had taken for the brightness of

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

the lamp was daylight. In an instant my frame of mind was changed. The same objects which a moment before so oppressed me appeared now in very different colours, and I regained my cheerfulness. The change came over me with the suddenness of a mental shock.

Indolence is our cardinal fault. It undermines our welfare in a thousand ways. In the educated it assumes the mask of a gloomy, sceptical pseudo-philosophy, which might be termed *Hamletism*—a name which will appear typical to those who know the manifestations of this phenomenon. It is really a surrendering of one's being, a voluntary sickening and dying. Health and life come from self-awakening.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "We deceive ourselves if we believe that there are violent passions, like ambition and love, that can triumph over others. Indolence, languishing as she is, does not often fail in being mistress; she usurps authority over all the plans and actions of life, imperceptibly consuming and destroying both passions and virtue."—La Rochefoucauld.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Body and mind are hardened and steeled by alternate shocks of cold and heat, joy and sorrow. Thus, nature and poesy educate their noblest sons by a process of true purification. Ideas alone do not satisfy us. A mere idea leads neither to peace nor to action. Sentiment, however, does—that indefinable something which it is difficult to describe, but whose influence on others we can clearly see, and which we may ourselves imbibe and turn into practice. It has been well said of Hafiz's poems that their wonderful stimulus lies not in their literal sense, but in the sentiment which they exhale and irresistibly communicate to the reader.

Nothing keeps off more effectually the terrible spectre of old age and that ossification of our individuality which announces or accompanies it, than a certain cheerful scepticism, not as to eternal truths, but as regards ourselves. Perpetual youth lies in the constant endeavour to guard against individual onesidedness.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

To write down what we think, even if we have no intention of publishing our thoughts, is a wholesome tonic, and one which in these days of over-refinement almost any one may indulge in. The best way of banishing an unpleasant impression or a painful thought is to formulate it clearly in our mind and commit the words to paper. We thereby find relief from our troubles and prepare the way for more cheerful sentiments.

A philosophy which dwells on the contemplation of death is false. True philosophy teaches the wisdom of life and utterly disregards death.

Passion is inactive suffering, while wise moderation leads to fruitful activity. Passion undermines our innermost being, moderation preserves us. In proportion as our activity becomes habit, it prevents suffering. Suffering depresses us, while action

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

elevates, and in such elevation we find new life. Partial or complete absence of elevation means sickness and death.

In order to preserve health and succeed in our endeavours, we must learn to be active at the right time and in the right way. Solitude is wholesome, but we must not long for it when we are with our fellow-men.

Whatever we strive for with all our powers we shall attain, for craving is but the expression of what suits our nature. The door opens to him who knocks. Life shows us daily examples of success attained by those who strive for wealth, glory, adventure or noble ends. Why should the striving for health not be equally successful?

If confronted by sorrow, remember that you cannot escape it by flight. Face it boldly and think of it in all its aspects, until

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

you come to a full decision as to whether it is best to ignore or to nourish it, and turn it to useful account. Before you show your contempt for an obstacle you must be sure that you can overcome it. What you merely thrust aside for the time being is sure to return to plague you with redoubled strength. Only full daylight finally dispels the spectres of the night.

Just as there is in the eye a point insensible to light, so there is within the mind a dark spot which encloses the germ of all that may bring about our ruin. It is of the utmost importance so to surround this spot by morality and a clear-sighted cheerfulness that it shall remain invisible as long as we live. If scope be given to it it will expand and throw its shadow over the mind, until finally the night of insanity descends upon the unfortunate victim.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "All sound persons have the conviction that they exist, and that the world exists all about them.



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

The mind has also its bright point, a haven of peace and light within its inmost depths, into which the powers of night and the fury of the storm cannot penetrate. This sanctuary stands ever ready to welcome us, and we must seek to preserve and enlarge it. Even insanity, as Jean Paul says, respects the one eternally bright spot within the soul.

It has not yet been determined what degree of mental discord marks the beginning of insanity.

However, there is within the brain a hollow spot which mirrors no object, just as there is within the eye a little spot that does not see. If we watch this spot with close attention and allow ourselves to become absorbed in it, we fall into a state of mental ill-health and have a premonition of things belonging to another world, which are really not things at all, since they possess neither substance nor dimension, though they alarm us as does the void of the dark night, and pursue us as something worse than phantoms, if we do not tear ourselves away from them."—Goethe: *Sprüche*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Strength is far too often confounded with emotion. Our present age fosters an abundance of emotion, always the outgrowth of a tender and weakly nature, while strength, which is the essence of health, remains uncultivated. We have a feeling for everything, but no strength for anything.

Health is best maintained by a proper appreciation and use of the advantages inherent in the various stages of life. Youth has its freshness and unconscious strength, manhood its wise moderation, age its quiet reflection. The young are rendered ill by doubt and vacillation, the old by undue impetuosity. Nature in her kindness has endowed all the seasons of life with appropriate blossoms and fruit.

Equally conducive to health is the constant appreciation of the myriads of generally unnoticed, but never-ending, pleasures which life offers to us. How many

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

incentives to joy, possible sources of lasting pleasure, pass by unheeded every day!

Tender-hearted and thoughtful persons have often remarked upon this. With Jean Paul, we ought to learn to give due weight to every achievement, every result of our endeavours, every fulfilment of our wishes; with Goethe, to praise nature whose every breath calls forth new life; with Hölderlin,<sup>1</sup> to give thanks for the blessings of the sun, and with Hippel, to count each day as a gift which we had no right to expect.

A certain pure and noble egotism is necessary if we are to remain healthy and contented. He who does not labour, live and love to please himself is in a sad plight. We seldom or never derive pure satisfaction from other sources than ourselves. All our actions bring forth, in due time, their own fruit, good or evil.

<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843), a German poet, best known for his *Hyperion*, a romance in the form of letters.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

In the last analysis, we shall find that happiness of mind consists only in cultivating what we really are and in the fullest sense possess. Let every educated person ask himself when he was truly happy, and he will answer: In that blissful time of youthful development when each day opened up new worlds to the intellect, new spheres to thought. The older we get, the rarer becomes such happiness. There are clearly defined limits to human knowledge, and in old age we are only sustained and cheered by looking toward what lies beyond everything we have learned and experienced.

Men of common clay differ from those of finer mould in this: The former find happiness only in self-forgetfulness, the latter in turning to their real self.

If thy spirits be low, betake thyself with thy morbid doubts and gloomy forebodings to the society of thy fellowmen. A chance

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

word spoken at a social gathering will often, like a flash of lightning, illumine the most terrible darkness that oppresses the mind.

We may learn through the writings of careful medical observers that anger acts on the bile ducts very much like an emetic by increasing or altering the secretions. We are told that fright affects the nerves, the heart, and the blood vessels; that fear and hatred cause us to feel cold, joy or anxiety to feel warm; that eager anticipation or gloomy forebodings bring on palpitations of the heart; that disgust and revulsion induce faintness; while laughing and crying directly minister to our bodily welfare, the latter often marking a crisis in certain complicated ailments. Sneezing, yawning, sighing are—negatively at least—within our control. And yet the subtlest and most remarkable effects of will power in daily life can hardly be expressed in words, though any one may find out for himself what he

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

can accomplish by training his will so as to act upon his body.

It has been said that the sight of the beautiful exerts a beneficial influence upon the eyes, similar to the green of the meadows and the azure of the sky.

The ancients knew nothing of hypochondria and hysteria. Let us try to be like them, and rival the Greeks in nobility, the Romans in vigour. Perhaps we shall then banish these modern plagues.

Hypochondria consists not only in conjuring up imaginary ailments, but in dwelling too much on those that are real.

Those whose minds are oppressed ought to enter in their diaries only thoughts that console them and bring before them pleasing images, so that they may have recourse to them in the hours of sadness. Thus the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

daily note-book may become a true friend and at least as valuable as the physician to patients of this sort.

In laying down rules for the hygiene of the soul we must bear in mind what is adapted to the different stages of life, for each of these has ideals of its own, both as to desires and requirements, which do not fit into the following period. Though youth may be tossed about by its internal restlessness, we perceive in its turbulence that striving for the development of latent germs which is in accordance with the laws of nature. When we reach the prime of life the well-formed character has established firm habits. Old age cherishes these as a cheering symbol and guarantee of the permanent. It is a beautiful provision of nature that recollection, be it of joys or sorrows, is ever comforting, and that we carry the pleasures, but not the suffering, of each period of life into the next.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

What is the past? Your own self. You cannot grasp anything pertaining to it, it belongs to you only through the germs which it planted within you, and which gradually developed and became part of your being. What is the future to you? Again your own self. It concerns you only in so far as it is your task to grow into it. To remember and to hope in any other sense is to cherish the delusion of a dream, and to feed on pure sentimentality.

A return journey seems always shorter and quicker than the route on which we first set out. So it is with old age. We can deprive it of the apparent rapidity of its advance only by considering it as a journey toward a certain goal, and acting accordingly.

Hufeland considered the married state, Kant celibacy, as most conducive to longevity. Both pointed to the lessons of ex-



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

perience. Hufeland showed that the greatest age is attained by those in wedded life, while Kant dwelt on the flourishing looks of confirmed bachelors. The key to the mystery lies probably in this: that up to the prime of life vitality and energy are preserved by celibacy, while in the years of declining strength health is maintained by marital care.

Life is not a dream. It becomes a dream only when the guilty soul refuses to answer the call to awake.

The power of the will, of which so much has been said, may often be advantageously employed by those whose mind is troubled in a way opposed to itself, that is to say, through the power *not* to will, in cases where compulsion would merely lead to exhaustion. Let such patients resolve to settle down to a placid resignation, form no plans, and not look upon the future in any other light than that of hope.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

What man of serious and honest purpose is ever fully satisfied with himself? But such discontent undermines the strength which is needed to reach the aim. Therefore it is necessary not to aim too high even in what is highest—our duties—in order that we may be sure of doing full justice to them.

Lichtenberg, the explorer of the land of hypochondria, who has depicted mental conditions as no one else has, makes some very valuable suggestions. "We often find ourselves lying down," he says, "in such a way that some parts of the body are very painful from pressure, but knowing that we can at any moment change our position, we do not mind the pain." He defines hypochondria most characteristically as "pathological egotism" and "pusillanimity." "My body," he says somewhere, "is the only part of the world which may be changed by my thoughts." "When," he relates, "during a

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

nervous attack I put my fingers into my ears, I immediately felt better, because I imagined that the buzzing caused by the illness was purely artificial." Let the hypochondriac, who is prone to extract poison from most of his reflections, derive a wholesome hint from thoughts such as these.

There is a species of involuntary hypochondria from which physicians sometimes suffer. For if hypochondria be a microscope through which we see the otherwise invisible, minute ailments of our own body, we physicians have with us in our science such an ever-present microscope, which shows us all the possible causes, complications, and consequences of every ailment.

If it be true, as wise men have said, that the art of finding pleasure is equivalent to the art of self-forgetfulness, it is equally true that there is no greater pleasure than that which we find in striving for an aim that fills our whole soul.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

If we analyse our hours of pleasure and happiness, we find that the state we were in, like all human conditions, was composed of two elements—of self-forgetfulness and complete self-possession, of a heightened sense of existence and an escape from existence itself. In this lies a certain contradiction, as in everything human, and yet it is not a contradiction in reality; for what we forget are our fetters, and what we are conscious of, with a heightened sense of enjoyment, is the freedom of life.

“How am I to exercise will power, my dear doctor, if it is just will power that I lack?” “If you lack self-possession, my dear patient, what can I prescribe for you but possession of yourself?”

He who imagines himself ill becomes unhappy through hypochondria, but he who defiantly and recklessly boasts of his health may become unhappy through self-neglect.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

As between the two, we are confronted by the need of acting as though we were valetudinarians—and such in truth we all are; content with this state, we ought to live with due care.

It may be said of the hygiene of the soul, as of all human endeavours, that there are two ways of looking at the world: We either take ourselves to be the pivotal point within the centre of the outer world, and endeavour to maintain our inner life against our surroundings by strengthening our character (as in the view of Kant), or else we willingly surrender ourselves to the world, and endeavour to accommodate ourselves to it, by looking upon ourselves as merely part of the whole—a philosophical view which, following Goethe, one might call an objective or poetical one. Through the unity of nature and her fixed laws, according to which opposite poles tend toward each other, these two contrasting views lead to the same re-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

sult. For he who develops fully his own individuality answers the purpose of the universal whole, which is made up of single subjects, while he who faithfully mirrors the objects around him, will also obtain a clear insight into his own self and, sacrificing his own self, will all the more surely regain possession of himself. Neither view is wrong. Both are adapted to different characters, as indeed all individual views of life are based upon individual character. What is apparently contradictory in such hints as these will, it is hoped, not lessen their practical value. The author's intention, at least, is clear, and he trusts that his suggestions may be comforting to each and all according to their needs.

## XI

FEUCHTERSLEBEN's *Diätetik* has, in a singular degree, won alike popular success and the encomiums of physicians. Dr. Max Neuburger, the present professor of the history of medicine at the University of Vienna, speaks of it as a work "popular in the best sense of the word but far removed from the ordinary run of books which deal with medical matters in a popular way, and merely breed dilettanteism and hypochondria, while undermining faith in medicine itself, to the detriment of the patient." "This little book," he continues, "is among the most beautiful and valuable possessions of German literature. It is wholly superfluous to speak of its contents, for who does not know this song of songs of the power of the will? The mere mention of its title awakens in most of us recollections of our youth, of our hours of irresoluteness,

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

weariness, despondency and, again, of self-conquest, of awakening confidence and renewed joy of life. What makes this book permanently great is that, reflecting as it does Feuchtersleben's own life, it takes hold of our inmost being, so that, in reading it, we seem to live over the author's experiences. . . . We rise from its pages with a feeling of renewed strength; indeed, a single one of his aphorisms outweighs volumes of discourses on moral treatment."

Feuchtersleben himself, indifferent to the popular success of his work, was also far from taking an optimistic view of its moral effect. "Will these pages cure or improve even a single hypochondriac?" he asks in the preface to his *Diätetik*. "I doubt it," is his own answer. "I shall be satisfied if they do not render the cheerful reader hypochondriacal."

Feuchtersleben's success would not have been as real as it was had he lacked a sense of humour—that delicate gift without which



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

moral writings rarely pass into literature. In his treatise on *Die Gewissheit und Würde der Heilkunst*, republished in 1849 under the title of *Physicians and Their Public*, there are some passages that recall our own philosopher-physician Holmes, and these are as true to-day as when first penned, nearly eighty years ago. "Everybody," says Feuchtersleben, "wants to be a physician, and everybody thinks himself entitled to ridicule the doctors. Old women (and young ones, too) dabble in our art, and pass judgment on us. . . . Their ranks are reinforced by the hypochondriacs, who feed on the poison which they suck out of medical books, and which they get rid of only to wish that it might kill the doctors." What was recently so well said of Oliver Wendell Holmes<sup>1</sup> may be applied. *mutatis mutandis*, to Feuchtersleben: "In these days of Christian Science, psycho-therapy

<sup>1</sup> "A Holmes Celebration," New York *Evening Post*, October 9, 1909.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

and ghost-craft, nothing would be more attractive, and few things would be more enlightening, than such comment as [he] would have made on these developments."

M. Adrien Delondre, in his sympathetic study of Feuchtersleben, has pointed out a certain vagueness in his language, beginning with the very title of his book. It may be granted that his use of the word "soul" may at times be puzzling alike to the scientist and the theologian. Above all, the logician will find a contradiction between Feuchtersleben's effort to establish the sovereignty of the will over the soul, and the doubt implied as to the very existence of a soul in such a passage as this:

"I shall leave it to philosophers who have time to waste to inquire into the distinction between body and soul, or even to try to prove the existence of one and the other. It matters little whether I assign to the soul the power which materialists attribute to a certain portion of the body, whose function

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

it is to think and to will. By whatever name we may designate the cause, the effect does not change, nor does the lesson which I draw from it."

Similar contradictions may be found in the writings of all philosophic moralists. A good deal of Feuchtersleben's charm and effectiveness lies in that poetic vagueness of language which suggests rather than persuades, and captivates the reader more by its noble accents than by verbal precision. Feuchtersleben's position as a medical teacher, philosophical thinker and scientist of the widest knowledge was such as to invest his utterances with that authority which only the master of his subject exercises. The lofty character of the writer illumines each page, and while single lines may lack clearness, the whole of his discourse affects us like the harmony of song, and awakens us to a higher view of life. Many-sided as was the literary activity of Feuchtersleben, he was in whatever he wrote, above all,

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

the moral teacher. He published many critical papers on science, æsthetics, philosophy, and general literature, and few critics ever brought to their task a more serious purpose. Richard Guttman justly says: "He understood not only the art of writing, but knew how to read, that is to say, read in his sense of the word. He made the highest demands upon himself, never more so than when called upon to pass judgment on the writings of others. His first principle was to make clear to himself the actual relation between the author and the man; and because Goethe typified in German literature this relation as no one else did, it is easy to explain Feuchtersleben's great predilection for the master mind of Germany as based upon a certain common trait in their choice and manner of reading." In reviewing a book by one close to the circle of Weimar's celebrities,<sup>1</sup> Feuchtersleben characteristically deplored the

<sup>1</sup> *Literarische Zustände und Zeitgenossen*, by Carl Böttiger, 1838.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

writer's tendency to dwell on the trifling sayings and doings of his famous friends. "Goethe, Herder, Schiller, Wieland," he said, "interest us only for those qualities that made them Goethe, Herder, Schiller, and Wieland. What they had in common with all the other poor sons of Adam had better be buried with them, as it died with them. It has nothing to do with whatever was immortal in them. The saying, *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, was not invented for flatterers. It has a deep significance, and it ought to read: *de mortuis bonis nil nisi bonum*. Only what is good in those we call good is their true self, and thus it is with the great. . . . An eye for what is great and profound is required to take the proper measure of great men; the vulgar see everywhere only what is vulgar. It is not sufficient to live in the same room with Goethe in order to describe him; let another Goethe pass judgment on him, and we shall have a very different story."

## XII

NEXT to the *Diätetik*, none of the writings of Feuchtersleben appeal to so wide a public as his maxims and aphorisms, which may be found scattered through his collected works under such headings as: "Leaves from the Diary of a Lonely Man," "Concerning Knowledge," "Art" and "Life." Feuchtersleben, like his eminent contemporary, Grillparzer, was in the habit of confiding to his diary, without thought of publication, much of what he wrote on the multitude of subjects which claimed his attention. No German writer of aphorisms has surpassed him in philosophic depth and epigrammatic incisiveness, and it is not too much to say that he ranks with the great writers of all countries in this branch of literature. Guttman justly observes that "in reading Feuchtersleben's aphorisms one

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

often seems to hear the voice of Goethe. Taught by the ancients and Goethe himself, Feuchtersleben understood, as few before and after him, the art of putting to paper. in strikingly simple language, a brilliant thought or accurate judgment, as the result of his profound study of great subjects."

So far as the present writer is aware, the aphorisms of Feuchtersleben, with the exception of those bearing on the *Diätetik*, have not before been translated into English. The specimens here selected cannot convey an adequate idea of the wide range of his intellectual interests, though they sufficiently illustrate the humane and philosophic spirit which animates whatever he wrote.

---

There is neither a classic nor a modern literature, but merely an immortal and a perishable one.

The conditions of antiquity can never re-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

turn, for they were caused by a happy coincidence of inner culture and outward conformity to nature. Freedom was joined to law, *naïveté* to intellect, power to delicacy, realism to idealism.

It is a useful occupation to look in great writers for a treatment of those problems that are not strictly within their province, such as, for instance, questions of natural science in the writings of poets. We often find that he who is at home in any department of knowledge accepts only what is handed down by other authorities; while the amateur looks upon the matter in an entirely new light. Thus I found in Kant's minor writings—which, by the way, are of inestimable value—hints which are of the greatest interest to the physician.

Much of the mischief in the world of literature is caused by authors who think that they are entitled to write books because they



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

are intelligent, well-read, and know how to express themselves. These are qualities that make a good reader; but before taking up the pen one ought to be sure that he is thoroughly at home in some one branch of art or science, and knows enough to go out into the world and teach.

We often unconsciously confound the writer and his subject. Many a mediocre neo-Platonist appeared great to his generation, many an indifferent natural philosopher seems great to the modern age, because the subjects they deal with are great.

The history of human progress discloses this remarkable phenomenon, that among primitive nations, in their uncivilised state, there prevailed philosophic myths and conceptions of the universe, whereas now, in the existing state of general civilisation, the people no longer feel such highly intellectual wants. This is even true of the less cultured nations.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

It is a sign of weakness to make great efforts on slight occasions. The intellect, too, has its economy; it refuses to waste a pound on what it may have for a penny.

To read books in foreign languages has this good result: it emancipates us from the tyranny of empty phrases, and forces us to stop and think when we come across a word which we do not understand. We Germans feel happy, when what we read sounds like tinkling bells.

Proverbs contain a sound and complete philosophy. They have this great advantage over systematic thought, that they stimulate the intellect instead of fettering it.

Let no one say: This is a book after my own heart, it expresses just what I should have said. One ought never to read in order to be confirmed in one's pet views. Books ought to lead us on, limit our horizon, or enlarge it, and correct and instruct us.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

To ask poets to improve the world shows little insight into poetry and less into the world.

A certain degree of general culture is derived nowadays from social contact, without personal effort; all that is left for us to do is to acquire a sound knowledge of some one subject.

The poetic imagery in the language of the Orientals shows that the fine arts were unknown to them. How formless and purely subjective is all they say, while with the Greeks everything appears fully proportioned and instinct with life.

The subject in art matters little. Everything depends on its relation to the nature and ability of the artist.

In art, as in life, we begin with imitation, gradually acquire mannerisms (in the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

proper sense of the word), and finally, if favoured by the gods, attain style.

Every work of art contains within itself the law whose living expression it is. To discover this law and formulate it, is the object of true art criticism.

The elements of natural history ought to be taught to children; art, that is to say the beautiful, to youths; with philosophy—abstract truth—let the mature grapple as best they can; while the old may have their say about history.

The real pleasure in works of art and in books lies in the sensation of learning to comprehend a superior mind, in the sensible expansion of the soul. What we do not understand, or what we so fully understand that we feel we could produce ourselves, never gives us the same sense of enjoyment.

The cry of the day is ever for the new.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

We want to be surprised, amused, and helped to kill time. This is the extent of our interest in art and literature. Yet how much more profitable is it to become thoroughly acquainted with one single noble character, one solitary great intellect.

Poetry, as well as works of art, ought to strengthen us, clear our thought and warm the heart, and not excite or confuse us, or make us sentimental.

There is a point beyond which our interest in life is sustained only by our sense of duty. Let this be pondered by the many for whom life has lost all interest, because they have known it only as made for enjoyment.

So many speak of the happiness or unhappiness of married life, as though that state existed only for their special comfort and enjoyment. Wedlock is a life task,

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

like any other, a state for which one has to fit himself. If we are worthy of it, it may become happiness, like virtue. We are not here to demand, but to deserve.

What is called "flattery" is for the right-minded generally humiliating, for when we are flattered we secretly have the feeling that what we are credited with is the opposite of the qualities we possess. Why be flattered at being thought capable of doing what we know we cannot perform?

Consider two things: What you think you are, others may also be, and what others do, you may be able to do likewise.

We can acquire and learn everything, except delicacy of feeling.

What the sagacious man has predicted, time reveals; what the philanthropist longs to accomplish, time in its flight gradually

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

brings about; the consolation which reason furnishes to the wise in misfortune, time at last brings even to the dull-witted. Thus intellect and time, tools of one mighty hand, serve one and the same purpose.

There are three ways of educating one's self—by independent thought, by conversation, and by reading. The first alone may achieve this object; without it the other two will fail.

It is not quite accurate to say that philosophic systems spring from the individuality of their authors. It is, however, true that individuality colours them. Every stoic professes the principles of stoicism, but these assume a different form in Epictetus and in Marcus Aurelius. That there is, however, an inter-relation between the parts of every physico-spiritual organism is undeniable. Kant's phlegmatic temperament did not produce his ethics, nor did his ethics

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

render him phlegmatic; but the one was in harmonious accord with the other.

Whatever your station in life, you have to study and practise the airs that go with your profession as well as its duties.

He who is not willing to deceive himself now and then does not know what real wisdom is.

Friendship, love, esteem, all these are merely general expressions. At bottom we stand toward every fellowman in a peculiar relation which cannot be summed up in one word.

There is nothing human without some deception. The twilight suits our nature best. If we would dispense with all appearances, we had better stop reading, conversing and writing.

We all have reason, and yet how few of



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

us are reasonable. "Public opinion!" We are sufficiently plagued by the opinions of single individuals. What must be an opinion made up of such units! And yet what should we call that instinct which gradually recognises what is genuine, and rejects and consigns to oblivion what is worthless?

It is but natural that those who pursue an error should love it more passionately than sensible men love truth; for error is born of man and loved by him as he loves his children. Truth, on the other hand, is our master, and is, moreover, equivalent to calm, not to passion.

Why should one classify men as either "good" or "bad"? Few are bad, still fewer good. The majority are nothing worth mentioning.

To agree and to approve are two different things. If I meet a person who is logi-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

cal and consistent, I am bound to approve even of what I consider contrary to my own views, because that is a necessary part of his entire personality. Each of us can find in others material for educating and complementing his inner self.

Superstition and irreligion—neither is superior to the other. Both are beyond the pale of reason.

Happy is he to whom life becomes a poem, but woe to him who substitutes poetry for life.

The malicious gossip of society is of inestimable value for our self-knowledge. It is remarkable what a fine instinct for faults malevolence has; it never calumniates without some reason.

He who speaks favourably of one whom

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

I have hitherto hated evokes my profoundest gratitude, for he awakens within me humility, the divinest sentiment.

Is it ever high-minded or profitable to consort with flatterers? Neither is it so to read books that please us without teaching us some wholesome truth.

To be silent among the stupid argues wisdom, to be so among the wise, stupidity.

“Virtue,” says Schiller, “is nothing else than an inclination toward duty.” “Virtue,” say Kant and Goethe, “is nothing else than the triumph of duty over inclination.” “Virtue,” says Jean Paul, “is not soulless duty, but love soaring above it, as the eagle soars above the highest mountain ranges.” Is it then so difficult for the best of us to say what virtue is? Or do they all perhaps say the same thing while apparently contradicting each other? I am inclined to the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

latter view. Every development means strife and battle. At first the recognition of duty must overcome our inclinations; while performing our duty, we gradually acquire an inclination toward it, and when we have reached the height of our development, what we should do, and what we desire to do, join in the blissful harmony which we call love.

The oft-heard expression, "I have done with doubt; I am now clear in my own mind," cannot logically mean anything else than: "I now know my weakness and know how to cure it; I recognise my limitations and know what I ought to do." Interpreted in this way, such an expression is entitled to respect; in any other sense it is ridiculous.

What do we most admire in the Athenians? That they recognised the greatness of Aristophanes side by side with that of Socrates.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Those who know how to conceal the shallowness of their thought behind the fluency of their speech do not feel the import of what they are saying, and therefore they are so lavish in the use of their words. They sometimes succeed in imposing even upon serious-minded listeners, who are not prepared for such shallowness, because they are themselves accustomed to express only what they think or feel, and to associate clearness and precision with every turn of phrase. Such listeners find it difficult to follow the flow of words that assails them, and cannot understand how important matters can be disposed of with such glibness. Much poetry is written nowadays, particularly in Germany, to which these remarks may be applied. One finds in it all the idioms pertaining to what is truly great and important, and the language flows on in a mighty stream, but it is a stream without a source and without an end. Those who think quietly will catch my meaning.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Refinement and good manners cannot be too highly appreciated, for they are the outward form of the intrinsically good and beautiful, and even imitation cannot fail gradually to awaken in us a desire to be in reality what we merely seem to be. Like honour itself, prevailing custom is a lever which lifts us in the direction of virtue. Decorum, like virtue, consists in self-control; it improves him who practises it, for he soon perceives that there is no better way of appearing refined than by being so.

Even the highly educated commit, in their judgment of books, the mistake of preferring the surprising to the truthful. Our very keenness of intellect tempts us to demand of the author that he astonish us and not that he disclose some hidden truth. We appeal to his talent, and disregard what would benefit us. Success is always dazzling, but truth is merely what it is, and demands a childlike intuition. It wants to be lovingly

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

understood, and turns displeased from the complacent intellect that spoils its own enjoyment while analysing it.

There is within us a certain something that points beyond, away from ourselves. We feel it in our wants, our longings, our hope and faith, our actions and our thoughts. And this marks us as of divine origin, and is the guarantee of the eternal.

Strive to build up a past at every moment of the present, while learning, doing, and enjoying. For recollection alone is possession. The present passes by while it is with us, and the future never exists.

Not the excitement of emotion, but the cool courage of reason, emerges triumphant from the constant battles of life.

That youth prefers tragedies, and mature

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

age comedies, is due, according to Kant, to the abounding vigour of the young, who recover quickly from painful impressions and feel doubly refreshed afterwards, while age cannot so easily shake off its impressions. I imagine the real reason to be this: Youth has never actually experienced the serious side of life, and therefore sees tragic events merely at a distance, surrounded by a poetic halo, while the mature man knows that, as Schiller says, "death is by no means wholly æsthetic."

It is unjust to condemn the use of foreign words in cases where one's own language proves inadequate. The educated writer will sacrifice a narrow grammatical patriotism to the demands of higher culture. As into a vast sea of fluid thought, which surrounds and unites all countries, he will delve into the linguistic treasures of all and appropriate what he needs in order to create definite images. Rich sources of knowledge



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

and rare opportunities for the broadening of human ties will thus be open to him.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing degrades the human character so much as counterfeit piety, since it belies what is most sacred.

I am fond of reading manuscripts. They appear to me like letters written to me individually, for in them I see the personality of the author, which print obliterates. What I myself write, however, I must see in print if I am to judge of it properly.

We are not necessarily sceptics or sophists if we come to the conclusion that there are different ways of looking at many

<sup>1</sup> "Both to purify and to enrich one's mother tongue is the task of the most enlightened minds. To purify it without enriching it proves often silly; for there is nothing as easy as to disregard the thought while looking for the expression. The great writers mould their vocabulary without troubling themselves about its elements. It is easy enough for the empty-headed to speak with purity, for they have nothing to say."—Goethe: *Deutsche Sprache*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

things. Indeed, the longer we live and think, the more frequently do we meet with proofs of this, so that at last we scarcely ever dare to lay down a general proposition with absolute certainty, but put forth everything we have to say with a good deal of reserve and with many exceptions. Herein seems to lie one of the reasons why Goethe's style in old age became so vague, timid and roundabout, as has been justly charged.

There are two stages of development. The first is that in which we begin seriously to think about ourselves. When we have learned to look objectively upon what we really are, we may be said to be of age and to enter upon our spiritual existence. Who-soever reaches this stage (without which it is impossible to enter upon the second) has attained a higher than a merely worldly level; for natural as self-contemplation seems to be, but very few indeed, even among scholars and thinkers, practise the

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

right kind of it. The second stage is reached by him who proceeds from thinking about himself to acting upon himself, who conquers and asserts himself, and produces something worth while. Then only spiritual existence becomes life, and develops into character, upon which human worth depends. Of what value is it to perceive what is my proper sphere if I do not fill it properly, to recognise my faults without correcting them? Few indeed are the elect that pass beyond the first stage of which I have spoken.

Any one-sided tendency, provided it proceeds from within and not from without, points to a talent which ought to be understood, developed, and guided—not suppressed. We must not try to change the purposes of the beginner, but further them just as they are. Of what use is to him a road which he cannot travel? None of the ways that you point out may be the right

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

one, or any one may be. And often enough we look for something in a place where it is not to be found, or in our search forget what we are looking for. In truth, it is more difficult to advise than to act.

Youth proudly feels that nothing is difficult, and takes life itself easily. But it plays with fire. As we grow older, things become more complex, and we ignore many problems because we find them too puzzling. In youth there are no riddles for us; when we have grown to maturity, they confront us at every step.

Great vices demand an unusual and prodigious energy, but great virtue an even greater. The world marvels at a Brinvilliers<sup>1</sup> and a Danton; an Aristides, however, it entirely fails to comprehend.

We are entitled only to as much joy and happiness as we ourselves give to others.

<sup>1</sup> A French woman of the seventeenth century, infamous as a wholesale poisoner.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

“Conquer or die” is not only the motto of the soldier, but of every one who knows the true meaning of life.

What I teach and confess to is not optimism (as has been asserted somewhere), for I insist that the dark side of things must not be ignored; not quietism, for I lay stress on constant activity in the search for what is right, and in the doing of it; not scepticism, for the assertion that there are two sides to all things, and that there is some truth in each, does not mean that everything is either true or false; not objectivism, for I would not deprive the individual of an iota of his rights; least of all indifferentism, for my conception of life presupposes an active interest in every form of human thought and endeavour, be it knowledge, art, or the ordinary concerns of life, in all of which there is room for an endless variety of opinions and deeds.

How bewildering it is for the learner to

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

find the teachers and disciples of the most diverse doctrines using the same arguments in attacking each other, to hear them correcting each other and talking one about the other, in exactly the same tone—now of pity, now of scorn, now of superior wisdom—but always with the same assumption of laying down the truth! And yet it is this very circumstance that points out to the beginner the road to truth. If he heard all this confidence-inspiring positiveness from one side only, he might perhaps be convinced by it forever, but hearing it from all sides, he is forced to look to himself for a reply. Only the activity of our own mind leads to productive results.<sup>1</sup>

As we grow older, not only our trials, but our problems, increase; indeed, all the tasks

<sup>1</sup> “To be indifferent as to which of two opinions is true, is the right temper of the mind that preserves it from being imposed on, and disposes it to examine with that indifferency till it has done its best to find the truth, and this is the only direct and safe way to it.”—Locke: *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

that confront thinking and moral persons. Much of what appeared simple and clear to the youth discloses its intricacies to the mature man, and where there was light there is now darkness. A sad experience, in truth, if with our growing tasks did not grow correspondingly the power to accomplish them, and if light did not come from above. And is not the very growth of the tasks which man takes upon himself an indirect proof of his growing strength?

There is need of a still undiscovered word which would dispose of many contradictions and disputes. I mean an expression for the general sense of the word "certainty," as designating our relations to absolute verities which stand or fall with us. We generally speak of certainty only in a mathematical and logical sense, but there is a fourfold certainty: that of the intellect, of the senses, of æsthetic approval, and of conscience. The one word for all these four

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

kinds, which are all equally distinct, is still lacking.

Mathematicians and musicians often display a certain intellectual narrowness, while jurists manifest great keenness and vivacity of mind. Mathematicians and musicians, up to a certain point, exhibit but the workings of a mechanism which deals, in a prescribed fashion, with objects that can be perceived by the senses; it is only when they reach out into a higher sphere, attained by the few who attempt to find the laws of this mechanism, that the higher intellect is called into play. The jurist, on the other hand, deals with laws that have to take cognisance of constantly changing circumstances. All problems of life may be regarded in the light of cases at law and treated as such. Indeed, what is practical philosophy but jurisprudence as applied to God and man?

To dwell in twilight is the lot of man, and



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

his destiny can only lie in his groping toward light, not in changing twilight into light itself. Therefore, faith will ever have to supplement knowledge, and a scepticism which does not deny, but which searches and examines, will ever characterise the ablest thinkers. The true philosopher will always be modest.

Too little self-confidence is as great an impediment in the intellectual as in the social world. He who, before forming an opinion of his own, wishes to learn first of all the opinions of everybody else, will fare just as badly as his opponent who relies only on his own judgment. The intellect must be conscious of its own strength and exercise it, in order to produce an effect and grow in power. But at the same time it must seek its reflection in the intellect of others, and then learn to analyse itself.

It has often been urged against metaphy-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

sical speculations that they move in a circle, while the pragmatic tasks and occupations of mankind move forward in the line of constant progress. But what is the ultimate aim of such speculation? And who is bold enough to imagine that the riddle of our destiny has been solved? Who can know whether that destiny lies in the goal for which we strive, or in the striving itself? Who can tell whither the development of each and every germ of thought within us may finally lead us? Is it conceivable that any one of these has been planted there without a purpose? And is not philosophy in pursuit of an ethical ideal? Must we not keep this ideal before us in all its pristine purity—even though we may think of it only as a bare possibility—if mankind is to advance toward a higher stage? Let these questions be duly weighed by those who have not considered that their objections to speculative philosophy involve nothing less than a demand for the intellectual suicide of human-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

ity—an impossibility, even if man were disposed to undertake it.

The term “materialist” ought never to be used, because it suggests a certain method of thought and a system of philosophy. In reality it denotes only the complete lack of philosophic culture. The very beginning of such culture lies in man’s directing his mind toward himself, so that he may understand what is meant by the term “spirit” and grasp it firmly; just as in geometry we have to know the meaning of the word “point” before we can learn what a visible point is. As Plato ruled out from his school the *ἀγεωμέτρητος*,<sup>1</sup> so we ought not to allow the self-styled materialist to have his say in matters of philosophy. He has not yet mastered the A of his A B C.

The defender of materialism thinks that he has said something weighty when

<sup>1</sup> One unfamiliar with geometry.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

he asks you "What is the spirit?" Does he know what the body is?

The use of the dialogue, or, as I should rather put it, the catechetical form of questioning, in philosophic speculations is most fruitful. All thought is in reality a dialogue with one's self. Questioning and answering is the sum and substance of all philosophising, and in philosophising alone lies true philosophy. It is, however, dangerous in choosing this method to write according to a set purpose and fixed rules. One must first of all make clear the nature of the problem to be discussed, and then look at it from all sides, without preconceived notions. The result, whatever it may be, is to be approached calmly and stated dispassionately. The stupidity of one speaker in the dialogue, who assents to everything, is as offensive as the dogmatic quarrelling of two who everlastingly repeat the same thing. In letters such quarrelling may not be out of place; in

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

a dialogue no one speaker is assumed to be in the right, though all are seeking for the truth. Plato is an unapproached model in this respect. It is noteworthy that there is scarcely a prominent thinker who in his writings has not tried his hand at dialogues.<sup>1</sup> This proves the great advantage of this literary form, and shows how much more vital and pregnant the critical method is than the dogmatic.

We find it much easier to think of the immortality of the soul in connection with a soldier who has fallen in battle than with a man who has been devoured by a bear. Why? Because we think only in an anthropomorphic way.

Kant and Plato were kindred spirits and

<sup>1</sup> " Plato, Job, Xenophon, Lucian, Æschines, Neo-Platonists (Hermes), Cicero, Mendelssohn, E. Platner, Berkeley, Hume, Diderot, Kant (the doctrine of virtue), Hemsterhuis (?), Herder, Lessing, Goethe, Fichte, Engel, Weishaupt, Wieland, Voltaire, De Ligne, Shaftesbury."—*Feuchtersleben's Own Note*.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

the greatest philosophers of their time for this reason: their methods are critical and they teach not so much philosophy as philosophic speculation. Such teachers are the true deliverers of the human intellect and the real lights of the world. They have in common this rare and invaluable characteristic: the union of an unprejudiced, sober and keen scepticism with the purest ethical idealism.

The reason why Plato has been so often expounded, attacked and defended, and has been rendered only obscurer by it all, is because his commentators have been concerned only with his theories, which to him were merely a symbol or a dialectic instrument. It is easy enough to understand him if we consider that his purpose is always purely ethical and his form poetic.

We do not fully grasp the importance of Kant as long as we merely class him with

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

other founders of philosophic schools, such as were his successors Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. His eminence lies not in his system, but in his method. He it was who planted the Archimedean point, as it were, without the sphere of philosophy, and thus succeeded in moving the world of thought. This is the meaning of his *Critique*, which raises him above all so-called philosophers, and thus must philosophic systems be constructed, tested, compared, and conjoined. He who calls himself a disciple of Kant is furthest removed from him. It is different with Spinoza and others.

Kant has the large and wide outlook of the man of the world, in the best sense of that term. Only a philosopher akin to him in intellectual freedom—which means, few philosophers by profession—can herein follow him.

The sentiments which the true poet

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

awakens in the reader are always of a moral nature. If it be remarked that this is only true of morally susceptible readers, my answer is: An immoral person is not susceptible to poetry at all.

Literary clubs never promote anything but mediocrity. Small talents come there to the surface and produce a momentary impression simply because they are parts of a whole.

The grand style of the ancients was due to their giving only the important, but that in its fulness (witness Sophocles, for instance). This stamps their works, however individual, with that inevitableness and symbolic general applicability which only the ideal bears. Has not some one said: "I write to you at length because I have not the time to be brief?" How much more is required to describe a single incident in all its rich detail than to cover one's intellectual poverty with a hundred rags.



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

There is something ludicrous and pretentious in all misanthropic declaiming against *man*. Such declaiming ought, at least, always to begin with the formula "*we men*."

There exists an inborn talent for everything, why not also a talent for pure humanity? Truly, just as there are born poets, so there are born humanitarians. Marcus Aurelius was of such.

Gifted young men must not be much lectured to or contradicted, else there is danger of provoking in them a secret pride which may become all the more arrogant because secret. In fact, an enforced humility is ever both cause and symptom of an inner conceit.

Never attempt to help youth by counsel. Only he can profit by the lessons of experience and knowledge who himself has gained experience and knowledge. Good

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

example, which brings before the youth a simple fact, without admixture of reasoning, is, in addition to an original impulse from us, all we can give.

To fall into good habits, or even to become accustomed to being good, is not nearly so difficult as to wean one's self of an old fault—a task far more arduous than is believed by those unacquainted with human nature.

Only he impresses me permanently, and has my fullest confidence, who is capable of smiling at his own limitations.

There is this distinction between the ordinary and the superior man: the former finds his happiness in self-forgetfulness, the latter in returning to his own self.

It is immoral and leads to ruin, to coddle one's feelings, even those that are moral.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

We must learn to be cruel and relentless toward ourselves if we would acquire self-esteem.

Genius needs and deserves no praise. It is not the result of its own efforts. But industry and moral worth deserve recognition and glory. Such will be the rule when mankind shall have attained a higher state of perfection. Then the world will enjoy its Homers, and it will erect monuments to its Aristideses.

Benefactions, alms, a kindly and charitable behaviour, are but poor substitutes for true morality. Indeed, there are many men who buy, as it were, their exemption from the higher obligations of honesty and the practice of real virtue by a show of these practices. They pass in life and in society for good people, but the Almighty reads their hearts. Truly good deeds are those that render doing good unnecessary.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Both the panegyrists and the detractors of so-called simple common sense ought to take pains to distinguish between sound sense and common sense. Sound sense never refuses to recognise that there are higher things, while common sense, in its narrow selfishness, often denies the existence of anything better than itself.

Nothing has been more injurious to the cause of real morality and religion than moralising and sermonising; nothing has harmed philosophy more than idle philosophic speculation; nothing has hindered ideal development more than the chase after vain ideals. The more frequently we discuss and emphasise in public these higher objects, the more certainly shall we call forth indifference towards them. Has not Kotzebue<sup>1</sup> said that his enforced church-going as a child made him irreligious? No

<sup>1</sup> August Kotzebue (1761-1819), a German writer of comedies very popular in their day.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

mere declaiming will ever give a new impetus to any period or any nation. The more speeches and arguments you labour to produce, the more loudly your opponent will exclaim: Phrases, empty phrases! While forcing your higher notions upon him, you merely teach him to despise them. Indeed, by promulgating, prematurely, valuable truths at an indifferent moment, before an indifferent public, you merely deprive yourself of the means of furthering your highest aims at the right time and before a susceptible audience. Silence is the only proper course in the presence of those who cannot be convinced, acting quietly up to one's own conviction the only thing that may produce results. A time-honoured principle teaches us that lofty moral purposes are not to be proclaimed aloud.

Any doctrine is really effective only as long as it is not labelled with a particular name. The magic disappears in the nam-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

ing. The essence of the teachings of Christ vanished with the founding of Christianity. The doctrines of Kant, at bottom nothing but the applied principles of sound, searching reason, lost their effectiveness when the name of *Critique* was applied to them. Indeed, ethics itself suffers by being called morality or morals. There is death in a name. Let him who would produce beneficent and lasting results ponder this maxim.

Nothing is morally so ineffective as undue moralising; indeed, nothing is more certain to produce the contrary of what is intended. If, for instance, we depict the misfortune of being rich so graphically as to provoke a smile on the part of the rich man present, other listeners will refuse to believe even what is true in our story. This ought to be particularly impressed upon writers who undertake to paint the tortures of an evil conscience in too glaring colours. They overlook the fact that there must be

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

a highly developed conscience before its voice can be heard. Only he who is good is troubled in conscience by his lapses, not the common evil-doer. The mediocre man, who is neither good nor bad, consoles himself, in listening to the poet's awful story, with the reflection: "Thank Heaven, I am spared such tortures!"—and becomes more than ever confirmed in his mediocrity.

You speak of truth in the relations of the social world! I utter untruths daily. Let this confession at least prove that I am truthful.

It is a common thing to say that one may compel respect, but not love. Precisely the contrary is true. It is possible to call forth love by a charm of manner which tells on every one; respect, on the other hand, is rendered only by the few who are themselves worthy of it. It is a sentiment which presupposes a far higher

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

degree of ethical development than is found in the average man. You may be ever so deserving of respect, yet you will never compel the masses to render you a tribute which is foreign and burdensome to their feelings.

Conscience is but good taste in ethical matters. We are more disgusted by what is vulgar than by crime itself. But, again, good taste may be defined as conscience in æsthetic matters.

We generally ask for advice only in order to avoid the necessity of deciding for ourselves. Those who are able to decide rarely require advice. And, after all, the best advice is: Rely upon yourself.

Whoever enters upon public office ought to pledge himself to continue for at least one year rigidly in the ways of his prede-



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

cessor. Thorough reforms can be introduced only by one who knows from personal experience what needs reforming, and progress will then be possible without provoking reaction. There is a moral value in established forms which those familiar with the ways of the world know how to appreciate.

I am as firmly convinced of the impracticability of abolishing the death penalty as any positivist. But how are we to characterise a condition of human society in which hangmen can be found, how can we justify such a profession and call for men who have to be instructed in the practice of it?

Whoever has to speak publicly ought to endeavour to find for his arguments the briefest, precisest and most telling expressions and to seize the right moment for their utterance. The longest speech, however eloquent, owes its real success to the final ap-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

peal. If the speaker fails in that, he has failed in everything. A moment's inspiration, even if in the midst of commonplaces, accomplishes more than the most carefully prepared discourse.

### XIII

FEUCHTERSLEBEN, who was so fully imbued with the spirit and the culture of Goethe, shared Goethe's fate in the comparative neglect of his aphoristic writings. Goethe's *Sprüche in Prosa* did not appear, even in Germany, in a separate volume until 1870, and perhaps not more than a hundred and fifty (out of more than a thousand) had become known to English readers before Bailey Saunders published his translation, under the title of *The Maxims and Reflections of Goethe*, in 1906. Feuchtersleben's aphorisms touch upon as many weighty subjects as Goethe's, and it is to be hoped that some day an English version of the Austrian moral philosopher may be presented to the public, manifesting the same care and discrimination which Mr. Saunders bestowed on the maxims of the sage of Weimar. He

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

submitted the scientific maxims to Professor Huxley, those dealing with art to Sir Frederick Leighton, and he had the assistance of an equally high authority, Professor Harnack, of Berlin, in the elucidation of some of the obscure portions of the original German. Feuchtersleben's text would amply repay the devotion of an equally intelligent interpreter. Perhaps more than any other of the numerous German writers of philosophic aphorisms—and Hebbel ranks him, in some respects, above Lichtenberg and Novalis—Feuchtersleben possessed the art of infusing that lyric element into his philosophy which is the greatest secret of his popular effectiveness, and therefore defies translation. Although, as we have seen, he was well aware of his poetic limitations, the poetic note was never absent from his prose, and the supreme importance of the union of thought and form was often insisted upon in his critical writings.

But, after all, Feuchtersleben's unique

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

distinction is that all his vast scientific equipment and all his literary pursuits served only one purpose—the welfare of his fellowmen. He was, as Professor Richard M. Meyer says, above all “an educator of the people,” and amidst all his interests the interests of humanity were ever the highest. Lessing’s *Nathan der Weise* was to him the embodiment of wisdom in literature. “Nothing purer than this book,” he wrote, “ever came from man’s soul and hand.” Purely metaphysical speculation, aside from ethical purposes, was not to his liking, and therefore the Fichtes, Hegels and Schellings had little attraction for him, although he knew them as well as his Goethe, Herder and Kant. In all philosophic systems he looked, above all, for the man behind the writer and for the genuineness of his interest in his fellowmen. His æsthetic ideals he found in Plato; his own unbiassed spirit of observation made him an admirer of the method of Bacon. What he thought as a

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

philosopher, he practised as a physician. He demanded for his profession the highest ethical and scientific standards. "Shall we believe," he wrote in a paper on *Aerzte und Publicum* (Physicians and the Public), "that medicine is nothing but a collection of names for diseases and remedies which can be learned by heart and made available, at will, by purely mechanical practice? Nothing can be further from the truth. Medicine is a science which, to use the striking expression of a high authority, 'keeps all the faculties of the physician busy, because it busies itself with all the faculties of man.' Nay, it is more than a science, it is an art. For art is simply knowledge turned into action, and action always calls for all there is in us—our intellectual powers as well as our physical. No man of weak character can succeed in any art. Every profession and occupation has its peculiar requirements that have to be understood; it is so with the priest, the government official,

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

the soldier, and the scholar. How, then, can the half-educated physician understand the conditions surrounding a Goethe, Kant, and a Rahel? Woe to the physical welfare of such highly gifted beings if their family physician be unable to judge of the requirements of their individuality."

Equally emphatic was his voice in those political questions for whose solution he so disinterestedly laboured. Though devoted to mankind, he was no flatterer of the people, and when, during the revolutionary agitation of 1848, thoughtless demands for the uprooting of all existing conditions were loudest, he dared to call for moderation and quiet reflection.

"The great question of the day," he wrote, "presses for solution, yet finds us irresolute. The source of all precious gifts, liberty, is disclosed to our eyes. Our parched lips thirst for its blessings, yet, like Tantalus of old, again and again we see it disappear. We all know what obstructions are

## **THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL**

**■ in the path of the progressive development  
■ of constitutional life in all those European  
■ states that are now shaken by tremendous  
■ convulsions. . . . Are questions which  
have taxed the greatest thinkers and legis-  
lators of all times and all nations—a Moses,  
Solon, Plato, Aristotle, Montesquieu, Rous-  
seau, Leibnitz, Spinoza and Kant—to be  
decided by the most ignorant?"**

Feuchtersleben cannot, any more than Plato, be considered to have been a friend of democracy, but, as Jowett has said, the term has hardly any meaning when applied to a philosopher whose writings are not meant for a particular age and country, but for all times and all mankind. The word "democracy" meant as little to Feuchtersleben as the catch-words "nation" and "race." With Herder, his fatherland was humanity, but if he saw no magic virtue in the ignorant will of the common man, neither, on the other hand, did he share the conservative dread of "republicanism."



## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

“From our earliest youth,” he wrote, “we have always heard of republican virtues, never of republican vices. The justice of an Aristides, the severity of a Cato, the self-denial of a Brutus, the heroic obedience of a Regulus, the nobility of a Sidney, Washington, Bolivar, the humanity of a Franklin—are these the horrible spectres against which we are now warned with such extreme anxiety? Are not a love of the commonwealth and unshakable fidelity to the law the characteristics of republican virtue? The error lies solely in confounding the words ‘republic’ and ‘democracy.’”

If Feuchtersleben wasted no time in trying to build up a system of metaphysics—“that art of going astray methodically”<sup>1</sup>—he drew constant inspiration from the great thinkers of antiquity. Yet, a wide gulf separates him, in one important aspect, from the two ancients whose views of life most resembled his own—Epictetus and Marcus

<sup>1</sup> “L’art de s’égarer avec méthode.”—Michelet.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

**Aurelius.** The image of death, as a factor to be daily reckoned with in man's thoughts, had no place in Feuchtersleben's philosophy, not even as a means of arousing man to a higher morality. Epictetus's indifference to the inquiries of the physical philosophers, moreover, is in marked contrast to Feuchtersleben's insatiable thirst for scientific data, as the safe basis of metaphysical speculation. Marcus Aurelius's lofty character, rather than the cast of his philosophy, must be considered as one of the permanent influences on Feuchtersleben's mind. The two were akin in that their philosophy did not spend itself in systematic search for abstract truth, but proceeded from pronounced ethical convictions and an active, though unformed, religious feeling. Feuchtersleben had all of Marcus Aurelius's virtue of moderation, his sense of the futility of ambition, his ideals of peaceful happiness within the home; but he never counselled renunciation of the pleasures of life.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

Least of all had he the gloomy resignation of a Pascal. "All our pleasures are but vanity; there is no good in this life save in the hope of another"—this doctrine had no part in Feuchtersleben's creed. His theory and practice were in accord with Montaigne's saying that "of all the benefits of virtue the contempt of death is the chiefest, a means that furnishes our life with an easeful tranquillity, and gives us a pure and amiable taste of it." As a teacher of practical morality, Feuchtersleben, in some respects, resembled Locke. He had in common with Locke the deep interest in popular education, the simplicity of method and sincerity of expression, the blending of idealism and realism in the variety of intellectual pursuits. The direct effect of all of Feuchtersleben's writings is one of elevating stimulation, an increased sense of the beautiful and enjoyable in life—the very opposite of what Matthew Arnold describes as the result of reading Epictetus or Marcus Au-

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

relius: "a sense of constraint and melancholy."

Perhaps Feuchtersleben's spirit was most closely akin to that of Vauvenargues, "one of the most tender, lofty, cheerful, and delicately sober of all moralists," as Morley calls him, and as Feuchtersleben equally was. He possessed all of Vauvenargues's humaneness, tolerance and gentle persuasiveness, and was like him in that poetic phrasing which heightens the effectiveness of thought while apparently veiling it. Do we not seem to hear the voice of Feuchtersleben in the saying of Vauvenargues: "Every condition has its errors and its lights; every nation has its morals and its genius, according to its fortune; the Greeks, whom we surpass in fastidiousness, surpassed us in simplicity"?

The permanent influence of Feuchtersleben's *Diätetik* may be traced in the uninterrupted flow of popular works on psychological subjects, both in this country and

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

abroad, whose keynote is the cultivation of will power. If we eliminate from this mass of books those whose main or subsidiary motive is a commercial one, or which are intended to pander to the crazes of the day, there still remains a respectable substratum of literature whose legitimate province is the hygiene of the soul. Among works of this class, which are the direct outcome of Feuchtersleben's teachings, two, both by Danish writers, have in recent years deservedly attracted attention. These are (in the German translation) Ludwig Feilberg's *Zur Kultur der Seele* (Culture of the Soul) and Carl Lambek's *Zur Harmonie der Seele* (Harmony of the Soul).

One cannot close a summary of the life of Feuchtersleben without reverting to the companion who was the source of his greatest happiness. Feuchtersleben's essays contain several allusions to his beloved Helene and, in one place, a faithful portrayal of her principal characteristics. She is described

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

as having been "endowed by Providence with a healthy, frank and cheerful nature, which won her every true heart, as well as with the blessed gift of looking at the world clearly and serenely, without ever making selfish demands or assuming superior airs." An uneducated young girl of the lower Vienna *bourgeoisie* when she first became acquainted with him, she learned to enter into his every thought and aspiration, and her natural intelligence ripened under his influence and direct teaching into a discriminating knowledge of life and literature. She shared to the full his admiration for the great writers of antiquity, and read after his death in her cloister-like retirement, besides his own works, solely the Greek dramatists. She survived her husband nearly thirty-three years, until May 21, 1882.

MAY 17 1921